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THE SILENT HOUSE.

FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

The bell tolls; evening and the bright stars come,
And fret the night winds like a noisy stream,
Drifting through groves of palms and plantain fields,
While in my hammock-bed I swing and dream.

Not all a dream which sees the native rill,
Which trickled oft through boyhood's thirsty lips;
The chestnut-tree, the fishes in the brook,
And on the glassy bay, the white-winged ships.

My boat on placid waves sleeps useless now;
Rank weeds usurp the plats of green and red,
Where years ago I launched the baited line,
Or slept, betimes, upon the leafy bed.

The wearied heart now longs again to be
Where happy hours, and sunny, joyous days
Sped on, still on, to where the shadows fell
That drove me out to seas and desert ways.

* * * * * * * *

No wife, no child; since these no longer come,
Yet forms so like stretch o'er the carpet floor,
And falling steps upon the threshold sound,
But waiting only, never passing o'er.

A year within the silent house I watched,
Till oaks were bare, and roses all were dead.
Then turned away, to cross the stormy sea,
Yet came the shadows with their fairy tread.

And midnight bells repeat a sad refrain,
While swings my hammock, and the wild winds rave.
The silent house, the shadows on the floor,
People the mists, and sit on every wave.

ENRIQUE PAMMAR.

LEONIE'S MYSTERY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

BY FRANK LEE BENEDICT,

AUTHOR OF "SAVED AT LAST," "THE COST OF A SECRET," "RACHEL HOLMES," ETC.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

From the day of her meeting with Yates, which had been interrupted by Mark Lasley, Leonie lived freer from the persecutions of the spring than she had dared to hope again to do. He did not attempt to approach her, troubled her with no threatening letters; but she was certain that this quiet could not continue long. She understood perfectly his aim; he was waiting to attack her at some unguarded moment when the blow would be most felt—she laughed to think how utterly his power was gone—wondered at herself therefor.

With a reckless defiance of anything that might come, Leonie went about from one watering-place to another, and wherever she appeared, her beauty and her conquests were the theme of every tongue. She fully believed Yates would be angered into fulfilling his threat. She never picked up a newspaper that she did not expect to see her own name, followed by odious calumnies; waited night after night as she entered ball-rooms, to see people stare coldly at her—but nothing happened; her success only increased as the summer went on, and there never had been a time when she appeared so full of life and spirits.

"I'll go out in splendid ruin, at least," she thought; "this poor gossiping society shall have a nine-days' wonder. Let it come when it may, he shall not find me taken by surprise! There is nobody to be troubled—unless poor Mark, wherever he may be—my poor, brave Mark!"

Lasley had never made any sign since that parting—she did not even know where he was. Yates she saw several times at Saratoga—afterwards at Newport—but he offered no show of recognition. She comprehended that every step she took was watched—notice taken of every man she addressed, in hopes that the favorable moment for mortally wounding her might be found; but she had no longer any fear—unaware to himself, Philip Yates had brought her desolation worse than the public overthrow with which he had menaced her.

She had been out on horseback late one afternoon, accompanied only by a servant—and at last reaching a lonely spot on the beach, she dismounted to enjoy the solitude of the place, bidding the man wait for her at a distance.

As she sat watching the smooth ocean, cold and blue in the evening light, and listening to its monotonous complaint, she saw Paul Andrews strolling toward her across the sands. He had been at Newport for several days; she had seen him once with Yates, but the sight of the pair, though they might have met on purpose to work out some plot against her, caused her no alarm. She kept telling herself over and over, that she had nothing to dread—her life was ruined—let them do their worst. Andrews walked directly toward her; she sat wondering if he would dare to address her, feeling no fear at any words he might speak, looking at him only with haughty surprise. He came up, saluting her courteously, and said, with respect—

"May I speak with you for a moment, Mrs. Dormer?"

"There have been many more fitting opportunities during the past week," she replied, coldly; "there can be no reason why you should intrude upon me here."

"You have been constantly surrounded by friends," he continued, humbly, "and I didn't want to expose myself to the chance of a rebuff—you see, I have a little foolish vanity to be hurt yet."

She thought the humility only assumed for the purpose of stinging her more sharply, and looked haughtier than ever.

"I understand," he said, with a sort of dreary smile, "that is nothing to you—there is no reason why it should be."

"None," she answered, out of the great kindness of her heart, finding it difficult to answer harshly while looking into his sorrowful face, for all she tried to steel herself by thinking it only a bit of acting.

"I leave Newport early in the morning," he went on, "and I could not go without speaking to you—I have waited several days on purpose to have an opportunity."

"I am at a loss to imagine what you can wish to say to me, Mr. Andrews; I certainly plainly showed you soon after my return East, that I had no desire to number you among my acquaintances."

"Yes," he said; "I was very angry about it—now I think you were right enough."

She looked keenly at him, trying to discover whether this was earnest, or whether in a moment he would throw off his mask and show her the face of a fresh enemy.

"You doubt me," he added; "that is natural enough—I doubt myself usually when any decent emotions are concerned, but I am truthful here."

"I am glad to know it," she answered, still on her guard; "such being the case, you will allow me, perhaps, to end this conversation."

"Not just yet," returned he, hastily, yet with entire respect; "I think I can give you a reason for listening to me—it is something where Mark Lasley is interested."

She was right; his humility had been assumed; he had sought her at the instance of Philip Yates—it was another effort to surprise her into some admission where Lasley was concerned.

"You can have nothing to say of him or any other acquaintance, which could in the slightest degree interest me, sir," she said, half rising.

"You mistake my meaning, Mrs. Dormer," returned he, quickly; "it was Mark Lasley who made me promise to see you before I went away."

She sat down again; her heart began to beat wildly, but she carefully guarded her manner still.

"Have you any message for me from Mr. Lasley," she asked.

"Not exactly that; I promised him to repeat to you a conversation that we had."

"Go on, sir," she said, in a low, still voice.

"Mrs. Dormer," he continued, while a flush rose to his face, "I was very angry with you at one time—I thought you had treated me badly—"

"I am so accustomed to being reproached with that by your sex," she interrupted, scornfully. "Perhaps I deserve it sometimes—but I scarcely fancy I did in your case."

"I think not either," he replied; "but I am not a good man, and I am apt to be vexed when my wishes are thwarted—but you will not care to hear about my private feelings."

"That would depend upon the spirit in which you spoke of them," she could not resist answering, kindly.

"Thank you," he said; "that is more consideration than I deserve! But never mind me—it is about what concerns you, that I wished to speak—to please Mark, you know for he's a good fellow, honest and true!"

He stopped; his eyes wandered over the distant waters; his face showed that his thoughts had strayed, too; Leonie noticed the change in it, worn and dissipated it looked still, but the hard, defiant look against man and heaven had gone out of it.

"I beg your pardon," he said suddenly; "I got to thinking of other things—somehow I'm not quite steady lately."

"You were speaking of Mr. Lasley."

"Yes—I know! He came to see me a few weeks ago. He would have been glad to quarrel with me; he wanted to find Yates, but I would not let him—I didn't want anything to happen to the boy."

"It was a good action, Mr. Andrews—you behaved well."

He smiled strangely, with a wistful look in his eyes.

"So we got talking; I had met Mark the day you went out to Hanker's. I wanted to annoy you, so I told him who you had gone to meet—that was mean."

"Oh, it doesn't matter—go on."

"I hadn't seen him after, till this day when he came to my house—I had been away, so that he could not find me before. Somehow it all came out; I told him how I had loved you—how I hated you, and he showed me how miserably I behaved. Another man feeling as he did would have knocked me down, but Mark was patient. He told me his story, too—that he loved you—oh, you don't know how well! But he didn't doubt me—he did not believe that you had trifled with him. He said he should know you were good and true if no explanation could ever be given."

Leonie closed her eyes; a few tears trickled slowly from under the long lashes, but she wiped them quietly away and sat listening.

"He wanted to know what hold Yates had over you that he might kill him if your peace could not be purchased in any other way—but I could not help him there; heaven is my witness, Mrs. Dormer, I did not know."

"Go on," she whispered. It was so sweet to hear this assurance of the nobility of the man she loved that it eased the terrible pang of feeling that henceforth she could be only a memory in his mind.

"I promised Mark that if I could ever find out I would—"

"No," she interrupted passionately; "think of his safety!"

"I shan't let that be endangered," he answered with the same old smile; "I'll take the matter in my own hands. But I told him that I would keep watch of Yates, and I have. I have already a hold on him. I let him alone, for I shall get a more tangible one. He has forged my name, but I can't bring it home to him; he has managed so that the guilt would fall on another—but I'll have him yet."

"Let him go," Leonie said contemptuously.

"Yes—when the time comes—on condition that he gives up any papers he may have that could concern you—don't you see?"

"I thank you, Mr. Andrews," Leonie said with her old impulsiveness; "you are very, very good. I beg your pardon for having misjudged you."

"Thank Mark," he replied; "it is his doing. But I want you to feel that you have somebody standing between you and that man—down low as I have fallen, I can do that."

"There is nothing to be done," she said; "believe me, I am graceful—but no human being can help here."

"I shall watch—I shall try—I'm a patient dog—you'll see! That's all I had to say, Mrs. Dormer; you are not angry now at my having ventured to address you?"

"I thank you sincerely. I hardly believed the world held a man so honest and kind as you have proved yourself."

"That's rewards enough—more than I deserve."

"If I ever did you any wrong, I beseech you to forgive me."

"But you never did; I can see now you didn't think of my loving you—it was only my folly. How could I suppose any woman would link herself to degradation like mine?"

"Ah, Mr. Andrews," she said eagerly, "it is never too late to atone—to redeem the past."

"I got beyond the turning point long ago," he answered; "I am going down hill very fast, and I don't think I care to stop if I could. But you see I'm not all bad, in spite of the world's verdict—maybe if life had gone differently with me years ago I shouldn't be where I am now. But that's no excuse. I needn't have gone to the bad because every hope broke in my hands."

She wanted to offer some consolation, but it was difficult to find words, for though the man had feeling enough left to suffer under his shame, it was plain that he was too reckless, too lost to restraint, to make any backward step.

"Don't try for pretty words," he said, with a hoarse laugh; "I know old Paul Andrews better than you do, and a miserable dog he is. But I think I've done a little good here, so good-night and good-by, Mrs. Dormer."

He was going away, but she called him and held out her hand.

"Let me thank you again," she said; "shake hands."

"It is for me to speak thanks—you are very good—I would say God bless you, only it would be no use from my lips."

He did not offer to touch her hand—looking at it wistfully as a devotee might regard some sacred relic, then strode away across the sands in silence.

It was now the end of August, and the next morning Leonie Dormer left Newport with her usual capricious haste, and not one of the people who considered themselves her intimates received the slightest intimation of her departure or any clue as to the direction of her journey.

Truth to say, Leonie had no aim; she was tired of the vapid society of the past weeks; weary of excitement that brought no relief, and hurried away that she might at least have the freedom of solitude.

THE SHARK.

We gave some weeks ago a picture illustrating the capture of a Cuttle Fish, and we give this week a companion picture in illustration of Shark-fishing. For some remarks relative to the Shark, see fourth page.

Accompanied by her maid and an old manservant, she journeyed about from one quiet place to another; not resting long anywhere, and toward the latter part of September she found herself in the neighborhood of Champlain, and hearing of a retired hotel not many miles off, on the shores of the beautiful lake, she determined to go there.

She had no purpose in this new caprice; she smiled at the restlessness which made her eager to be up and away when she knew so well that after a brief season she should be just as insane to leave the picturesque spot as she was to reach it. She said this over and over to herself; she was silly not to bear her burthens quietly, to force herself to rest—but she would go; ignorant, thoughtless as the wisest of us are that the commonest actions of our lives are under guidance, that in the most seemingly trivial steps the hand of Fate leads us on, prepared to carry out the plan that she has arranged.

In the very direction in which she was travelling had passed, not long before, the girl whom Leonie had ceased even to remember with a smile of scorn at her petty cruelty, and believed to have passed completely out of her life, as firmly as Milly herself was convinced that the future could hold no dark place where the threads of their destinies should again be intermingled.

After Mrs. Gresham was thoroughly recovered from her illness and they had found time to see that in their recent good fortune there was nothing to hinder all sorts of reasonable pleasure to be got out of existence, she yielded to Milly's persuasions, and they started with the children on an expedition through the bright autumn.

Milly had always been eager to visit the neighborhood of Lake Champlain, for it had been the home of her mother's girlhood—that mother whom she only remembered among her childish recollections as so beautiful and sad that there was a romance and poetry connected with her in Milly's mind almost as sacred as her religion.

Milly and her aunt were excellent friends in these days; the experience of the past months had been able to teach them both wisdom. Mrs. Gresham was so grateful for Milly's attention during her tedious illness that she forgot she had ever been in a rage with her, and Milly was so glad to have an opportunity of making some tangible return for all the care and expense she had been in days gone by, that she gained out of her gratitude a new power of affection. Besides—excuse my being so practical and commonplace—money does smooth the rugged road of life, and there was plenty of that now and to spare, thanks to Mrs. Wallace's remorse.

So they wandered away to the beautiful lake and enjoyed the change immensely. The hotel where they stopped was situated almost on the water's edge, and a short distance off was one of the most picturesque little villages imaginable. The whole scenery about was grand and wild; with lofty hills, down whose sides tumbled wonderful waterfalls—whose laps held a succession of glens so lovely and romantic that if Americans had to cross the ocean to see them they would rave over their beauty, and we should be inundated with newspaper letters and books of travel minutely describing their varied charms.

Mrs. Gresham was willing enough to sit down and rest for a season in this pretty spot to recall memories of her girlhood and think with unalloyed satisfaction of the coming years, so unexpectedly freed from the burthen of care and money vexations, and to Milly it was like breathing new life and strength to enjoy the fresh air of the blue mountains.

She spent her days out of doors, and there was no glen so hidden that she did not explore its recesses, no hill so steep that she did not clamber to its summit to watch the beautiful landscape spread out like a picture below.

Very rapidly body and mind grew invigorated and thoroughly healthy; she was worlds away from the fanciful girl of that brief season of happiness, as far removed from the impatient creature who had struggled with such blind madness under the thraldom of a first great sorrow.

One day she had rambled a long distance up among the hills, had passed through so many turns and windings between the rocks and through such a variety of glens, that she was really unable to tell which way to turn to get back to the hotel. She mounted a little higher in hopes of attaining some point of view that would give her a sight of the village, or at least some landmark by which she could gain an idea of the direction she ought to take in order to reach it. She came only upon a lofty waterfall with which she had not yet made acquaintance—it seemed to her more peculiar and lovely than those she had before visited.

In front of her rose a perpendicular mass of rock to a great height, completely covered with green moss and delicate ferns, over which a stream of water swept in a broad, thin sheet that was like a finely embroidered lace veil flung over the emerald tints, and fell into a moss-lined basin just at her feet. The depth of the moss smothered the noise of the water; it foamed into the basin with a bell-like murmur so musical that it seemed to Milly to be playing some exquisite melody.

She stood there for some moments, looking and listening, then moved on toward a projecting ledge of rocks and found that she was not alone in the solitude. A lady was seated there; her head turned away; she moved at the sound of a stone which Milly's foot

dashed over the cliff—looked up—and Milly saw that it was Leonie Dormer.

The girl felt her heart cease beating; it was like coming face to face with an evil destiny that had taken human shape to mock her with the dreadful fruition of its work. She could neither move nor breathe for several instants—could only stand looking full in the woman's face with a sensation of absolute dread.

At the first glance Leonie's short sight did not recognize Milly in the strength and beauty her face had gained out of suffering and repentance, the face which she had known as so childishly pretty. Seeing her gaze returned with that perplexed expression one wears when trying to recall a countenance, Milly felt that she was unrecognized—if she could get away before the creature had time to remember or address her!

But the very movement she made to obey her thoughts, so quick and impulsive, recalled to Leonie's mind the excitable girl of old days—she knew her at once.

"Miss Crofton!" she exclaimed. "Surely it is Miss Crofton—not some trick my eyes are playing me!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

When Milly heard Leonie Dormer's voice her first impulse had been to hasten on without a word, but Leonie came toward her holding out her hand with as much friendliness as if their last meeting had no place in her mind.

"So it really is you," she said laughing. "How you stare at me—but no wonder; the idea of our meeting in this place! I am not quite certain yet that it is not your double—do speak and tell me you are not a ghost."

The same ringing laugh that had so vexed Milly's heart in the days gone by; the same low, indolent voice that gave such peculiar grace to every word; what a torrent of recollections surged up on the sound and shook her very soul.

Men under such unpleasant circumstances are slow to think and act, unless in a case where a fellow man is concerned, and there is a shadow of pretext for knocking him down—but women's thoughts come and go like flashes of lightning.

This woman should not perceive that she had power to move her in any way, should not be able to exult in the idea that Milly had never recovered from the effects of the blow dealt by her hand. But Leonie's intention was very different; she had long since forgiven Milly's cruelty, and had sometimes feared that she might unconsciously have had a share in bringing about the trouble between her and Thorman.

"It is Mrs. Dormer," Milly said with delightful indifference. "No wonder you are surprised to see me—I am less so. The place is so lovely that I am not astonished to see a fairy or any other beautiful creature start up."

"Ah, you have found voice—you are not a spirit," returned Mrs. Dormer, laughing; "and what a pretty greeting you give me—please shake hands."

But Milly was busy arranging her dress—it had been looped up over her blue petticoat, and some of the festoons had fallen down good-naturedly.

"I would with pleasure," said she, laughing as charmingly as Leonie herself, "but you see both hands are occupied—imagine that American greeting done and over."

She did it so very well that anybody but this woman would have been deceived—she saw that Milly still hated her.

"The unforgiving little monster," she thought; "what did I ever do to her? But how lovely she has grown—what on earth has changed her so! There's a soul back of those eyes that has wakened—really, I must find out what it all means—who would have dreamed it!"

"You are too busy with your dress or too indifferent to be surprised," said she; "but I can't forego my woman's privilege! How came you here?—where did you come from?—do tell me."

"Up the hill—from the village—and I have torn my prettiest petticoat," replied Milly, and laughed again.

Mrs. Dormer was vexed, but she enjoyed a bit of high comedy well performed, and she could not help laughing too.

"You vexatious creature!" cried she. "How came you in the village, then, since one must question categorically?"

"Oh dear, yes—I beg your pardon—think of my being so stupid I did not understand! I really believe the air of these quiet places dulls one's wits."

Leonie had an internal conviction that Milly's, so far from being dulled, had been decidedly sharpened by the air or some other cause. She had been the recipient of the coolness and raillery long enough—perhaps she had better warn the young woman that the dullness had not deprived her of her old dangerous weapons.

"So odd a place to meet you," said she; "of course it must be a bridal trip—only lovers or misanthropes would come here—am I to congratulate you?"

"Only on the pleasure of meeting yourself," not flinching under the thrust which planted a wound that Leonie, ignorant of her own share in Milly's tragedy, did not dream of inflicting.

"It is I who am to be congratulated, dear mademoiselle," said Leonie, growing very foreign and very languid.

"Or else pitied," said Milly.

"How so, I beg?"

"Since you say the place could only be sought by lovers or misanthropes," returned Milly, following up her success.

"*Fine mot*," said madam, laughing again. "Oh, well, everybody knows that I am a misanthrope, but a charming young blossom like yourself cannot make such a plea."

"Oh, I came with my aunt," replied Milly, "so the being in love or misanthropic will fall to her charge."

"How comfortable and convenient to have an aunt," said Leonie with the most delicate sneer; "I wish I had one."

"Yes," drawled Milly, with a whole volume of meaning in her voice; "I dare say you would often have found one a great convenience."

Leonie recollected on the instant Maud's story about the dinner party; the best women in such an encounter will be mean—to other women.

"Yes," said she meditatively, "observation has shown me they are not always a sufficient shield for young women to hide behind."

"Oh, I know nothing about that," answered Milly, a little too defiantly; "I never had occasion or felt inclined to hide behind anybody."

"No," said Mrs. Dormer, in a voice so nicely balanced between a doubtful assent and an insolent interrogatory, that a man would have believed it the former, but the blood tingled in Milly's veins, for she knew very well which it was, and felt the full force of the taunt.

"I am so grateful for your confirmation of my words," said Milly sweetly.

"And the gratitude of a dear girl like you is so pleasant to have," said Leonie, with equal sweetness.

The foils had clashed and glanced off both sides; it was scarcely worth while to continue the encounter on that ground.

"What lovely views there are from these hills," was Mrs. Dormer's next remark, moving nearer to the edge of the cliff.

Milly assented, and for a few moments they did admiration of the scenery in fine style.

"It must be getting late," Milly said suddenly, glancing at her watch. "Why, it is after sunset!"

"And I fancy we are a long way from the village."

"Indeed, I don't quite know where we are; I was climbing the hill in hopes to get a look out."

"I was in the same predicament," said Leonie; "I tried several paths, but each seemed to lead me further astray than the one before it—I am very fortunate to have met you."

She knew that would vex Milly, and it did.

"Fortunate, provided I can help you out of your difficulty—but I am not certain about being able."

"*Ceil!*" cried Mrs. Dormer. "Well, *ma belle*, we shall at least have the consolation of being lost together."

"You will make me unwilling to find the way out if you remind me of that pleasure," said Milly.

"Ah," said the other, "but we shall go together, too."

"Not if I know it," thought Milly; "I'll put her in the right path and leave her—she makes me feel too wicked—the beautiful fiend." But she did not express anything of her reflection in words or voice. "I only hope we may be able to do so," she said pleasantly. "I will go on to the top of this cliff—very likely I can see the village from there—don't come, for if I fall I should throw you backwards."

Mrs. Dormer stood quietly near the waterfall, watching Milly as she bounded up the rocks with a rapid step, her stay having taught her to ascend the most troublesome places. She reached the top, and Leonie saw her look eagerly about, then try several paths, and then she sat down on a mossy rock to wait, feeling thoroughly tired by her unusual walk.

Presently Milly returned, stepping slowly down over the rocks with what to most people might have passed for undue caution in descending the rugged path—but Leonie with her quick perceptions interpreted the hesitation more correctly—she knew that Milly could not endure being forced to rejoin her and have their conversation resumed.

"What a dreadful disposition she must have," thought Leonie. "One would have thought she might have forgotten the most bitter hatred in all these months."

Just then she heard Milly speaking as she drew near the waterfall.

"I can see no sign of the village," she said; "it is very odd where we can be."

"Perhaps the place is enchanted and the genii are angry because we have come," returned Leonie, trying to laugh, but feeling greatly discomposed by Milly's words, for she had just discovered that she was thoroughly exhausted.

"The worst of it is," continued Milly, "there's a heavy cloud coming over South Mountain, mist or rain or both, so we must make haste in some direction."

Mrs. Dormer sprang up at once.

"You have no idea which path would lead us least astray?" she asked.

"Not the slightest," replied Milly composedly. "Whether we had better go down the way I came up or go to the top of the cliffs and descend on the other side—the village lies in one direction or the other."

"How reassuring!" cried her companion.

"Yes; we can have the satisfaction of believing that we are right till the last moment."

"Thank you; I object to last moments! *Eh bien*, which path do you propose to take?"

"I am as much at a loss as you can be; I have taken so many turns, and climbed so many hills, that I can't tell my right hand from my left."

Leonie began to laugh with the recklessness which was part of her nature.

"We shall have to imitate the schoolboys," said she, picking up a little flat stone. "See—I toss this in the air—if the gray side comes uppermost, we go back the way you came; if the yellow, we try fate on the other side of the cliff."

"Very well; I warn you the path seemed very steep, as I looked over the edge."

Mrs. Dormer shrugged her shoulders indifferently.

"One—two—now for luck or fate!"

She tossed the pebble in the air; as it fell, both leaned over it—the yellow side was uppermost.

"We are doomed to try the cliff," said she. "I confess to being superstitious—I wouldn't tempt destiny by going the other way for the world."

She spoke half in jest, half in earnest; Milly herself felt the same little superstitious feeling in favor of following the decision of their oracle, such as it was, which everybody has had, foolish as such things are, in moments of perplexity.

"So be it," she said. "We had better start—it is growing dusk, or that cloud is coming up very fast."

They clambered up the ascent—Milly somewhat burthened with a plaid which she had brought on her arm to make a comfortable seat, and Leonie so weary that even the excitement of knowing they were lost could not make her forget her intense fatigue.

But of all people in the world, each felt that her companion was the last person to whom she would admit either weariness or fear—so they climbed on, laughing and jesting, and being as witty and playful for each other's benefit, as if they had been in a ballroom with a crowd of men to listen to their *bon mots*.

They were at the top of the cliff and stopped an instant to get breath and look out for some sign of the village.

Away in the west were broad streaks of dark red half covered with smoky flecks, but the mist or rain coming from the south had rushed up so rapidly, that it was like gazing out over a gray sea, and in the dim light the path at their feet looking fearfully precipitous and uncertain.

Leonie gave one glance and started back a little.

"Are you afraid?" asked Milly, with civil contempt.

"Not in the least; my head was dizzy for a second—it is over."

"Come then—I'll go first."

"No indeed; that shall be my privilege."

Be helped out of an unpleasantness, or it might be danger, by this woman? No; Milly would not, if the consequence of leading the way were to be a fall from the top of the height, and a broken back to be nursed! She started down the suspicion of a path without another word, and Leonie followed with a reckless laugh. Two old woodsmen could not have shown less appearance of timidity, and certainly would have displayed much more caution, than these two women, animated by feelings of cordial hatred on one side and scornful repulsion on the other, caused by consciousness of that same hate.

Down they went; the descent which under ordinary circumstances would have been rather arduous than dangerous, now really was sufficiently perilous, for the red light died out of the sky and the mist surged rapidly toward them, some drops of chilly rain already beginning to fall as a precursor of the storm which was close at hand.

They had passed the steepest part of the way and were apparently approaching a series of glens similar to those on the other side of the hills, and the sound of waterfalls began to be audible.

"Can you see out at all?" Mrs. Dormer asked.

"Not in the least! I thought when we got here I should be able to form some idea of our whereabouts."

"But you can't?"

"No more than if we were in the moon."

Leonie tried to laugh—made a misstep—tried to catch at a shrub for support, but the twigs gave way in her hand, and she fell heavily upon the ground, unable to repress one sharp cry of pain.

Milly was some distance in advance, peering about among the shadows, but she heard the sound and called—

"You did not fall? You're not hurt?"

There was no answer; she made her way hastily back to the spot, and found Madame trying to loosen her dress from the bushes and get up.

"Oh, are you hurt?" Milly asked, her anxiety at once roused.

"I think not—I can't tell till I'm up—very awkward of me—thank you," as Milly extricated her dress and helped her to rise.

But the instant she tried to stand, the pain forced a groan from her, and she would have fallen if Milly had not held her firmly.

"What is it—where are you hurt?"

"My foot—"

"You have sprained your ankle?"

"I don't think it is—the pain is in my foot. Let me sit down a minute—perhaps I have only bruised it against a stone."

Milly forgot her dislike to the woman—the wrongs she had received at her hands—everything except her suffering, and that she could see was excessive by the whiteness of Mrs. Dormer's face and the nervous clenching of her hands. Carefully as she could have touched a sister, Milly seated her on a convenient rock, and supported her in her arms.

"I think the pain will pass in a moment," Leonie said, trying to keep her voice from trembling. "Don't let me tire you—I can sit up."

"Lean against this tree, and let me loosen your foot," Milly said, for she saw that the pain did not decrease.

In spite of her hasty deprecations, Milly knelt and unbuttoned the dainty kid *bottine*.

"Ah, that is easier—perhaps if I draw it partly off for a little it would get better."

Milly attempted to do so. Leonie fairly shrieked, then exclaimed, as Milly stopped in a fright—

"I beg your pardon—I didn't think I was such a baby! Let it alone—I can walk—I must walk."

She struggled to her feet—tried to take a step and fell backward.

"I can't do it," she said, the horrible pain sending a deathly faintness over her; "I must have broken some bone in my foot."

"Let me get your shoe and stocking off and—"

"No, no—it would do no good! See now—you must not mind me—just leave me here and make the best of your way down."

"Indeed I will not!"

"You must come out somewhere—you can send somebody back for me."

"I shall not leave you, Mrs. Dormer—that is settled."

"Then I shall walk if it kills me."

"You will do no such thing," returned Milly firmly, restraining her as she tried to rise.

"It would be the wisest thing for you to go on," Leonie said.

"I am not quite a brute," exclaimed Milly.

"Indeed, you are only too kind," returned she warmly. "But you see it can do no good to stay—I'm not in the least afraid—besides, you would be sure to find help somewhere."

"I might land in the woods at the foot of South Mountain—quite as likely as anywhere."

"Honestly?"

"Honestly! I don't know which way to turn."

"Well, certainly there's no use filling the neighborhood with lost and distressed females—we may as well stay together and—"

A new and severer twinge of pain checked her words.

"I must find a more comfortable place for you," Milly said, "and get your boot off—wait a moment."

She ran a little further down the descent and found herself in a sheltered glen; in the dim light she could see a waterfall dashing across the rocks before her—near by was a group of trees, under which she spread her plaid, then hurried back. In spite of Mrs. Dormer's expostulations, Milly half-carried her to the place, and after the first attempt to rest her foot on the ground, Leonie had enough to do to keep back the groan which the exquisite torture elicited. Supported by Milly, she managed to hobble on the other foot to the trees, and then nearly fainted.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE sweetest songs are those
That few men ever hear
And no men ever sing;

The clearest skies are those
That farthest off appear
To birds of strongest wing:

The dearest loves are those
That no man can come near
With his best following.

☞ In Paris a fat cat is said now to be worth $1.90.

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, Dec. 24, 1870.

TERMS.

The terms of THE POST are the same as those of that beautiful magazine, THE LADY'S FRIEND—in order that the clubs may be made up of the paper and magazine conjointly when so desired—and are as follows:—One copy (and a large Premium Steel Engraving) $2.50; Two copies $4.00; Four copies $6.00; Five copies (and one extra) $8.00; Eight copies (and one extra) $12.00. One copy of THE POST and one of THE LADY'S FRIEND, $4.00. Every person getting up a club will receive the Premium Engraving in addition.

☞ *Club subscribers* who wish the Premium Engraving must send *one dollar extra*. To those who are not subscribers we will furnish it for *two dollars*.

Subscribers in the British Provinces must remit twenty cents extra for postage. Papers in a club will be sent to different post-offices if desired. Contents of Post and of Lady's Friend always entirely different.

Subscribers, in order to save themselves from loss, should, if possible, procure a Post-office order on Philadelphia; or get a draft on Philadelphia or New York, *payable to our order*. If a draft cannot be had, send a check payable to our order on a National Bank; if even this is not procurable, send United States notes and register the letter. Do not send money by the Express Companies, unless you pay their charges. Always be sure to name your Post-office, County, and State.

SEWING MACHINE Premium. For 30 subscribers at $2,50 apiece—or for 20 subscribers and $60—we will send Grover & Baker's No. 23 Machine, price $55. By remitting the difference of price in cash, any higher priced Machine will be sent. Every subscriber in a Premium List, inasmuch as he pays $2,50, will get the Premium Steel Engraving. The lists may be made up conjointly, if desired, of THE POST and the LADY'S FRIEND.

Samples of THE POST will be sent for 5 cents—of the Lady's Friend for 10 cents. Samples of both will be sent *free* to those desirous of getting up clubs.

Address
HENRY PETERSON & CO.,
319 Walnut St., Philadelphia.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

With the January number of this "Queen of the Monthlies," a new and, as the ladies say, very desirable feature is added.

By an arrangement made with a celebrated Pattern House in New York, accurate patterns of nearly all the designs for suits, &c., in the Magazine, can be furnished at very low prices. These patterns are believed to be superior to all others in the market, for the ease with which the ladies of every family can understand and use them. Many of what are called patterns, the ladies tell us, are utterly useless to any but a professional seamstress—but these are available for common household work and ingenuity.

The ability to furnish such cheap and admirable patterns to its readers, gives "THE LADY'S FRIEND," we think, a superiority over all its competitors. It will enable the ladies to save the cost of the magazine many times over in the course of the year—and make it thus a matter of positive economy to subscribe for it.

The LADY'S FRIEND is still furnished with THE POST. See Terms.

OUR LETTERS.

Our letters renewing subscriptions come to us as usual at this season of the year, freighted with complimentary allusions to THE POST and THE LADY'S FRIEND. Of course we cannot pretend to give all that is said—but we may note the following from last week's letters:—

J. H. T., of Lexington, Virginia, says:—

"We regard THE POST as one of the best papers published."

T. A. J., of Rushville, Indiana, says:—

"I find it less trouble each year to get up a Club, as your paper and magazine become better known. It is impossible for us to do without them."

Mrs. L. C. F., of Canton, Illinois, says:—

"I think I cannot do without THE POST and THE LADY'S FRIEND—and shall take them as long as I live."

Miss S. McN., of Moorefield, West Virginia, says:—

"I have been thinking I ought to take but one of them next year—but after trying for weeks to make up my mind which to give up, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot possibly do without *both* the paper and the magazine."

M. M., of Gwynedd, Pennsylvania, in renewing her subscription, writes:—

"I could not possibly relinquish so old and cherished a friend as THE POST, for it has been received with pleasure in my home for nearly 40 years."

Mrs. A. J. B., of Bloomingsburg, Indiana, says:—

"We have taken your paper the last year, and we are very much pleased with it. I send you a Club of five subscribers, all new ones."

J. L. B., of Kilmarnock, Pennsylvania, says:—

"I cannot give up such dear friends as THE POST and LADY'S FRIEND, even if I have to make a sacrifice."

Mrs. J. E. W., of Indianapolis, Indiana, says:—

"This makes seventeen years that we have been taking your paper—and I would as soon think of doing without butter for our table, as doing without THE POST."

Mrs. J. R. B., of Peterboro, New York, says:—

"How any one can read a single number of THE POST, and say no when asked to subscribe, is more than I can understand."

S. A. B., of Lebanon, New Hampshire, says:—

"Your paper is the best of the weeklies in the opinion of all your old subscribers here, myself included."

FOREIGN NEWS.

PARIS IN DARKNESS.—A despatch in the Times, dated Berlin, December 14, states that the supply of gas in Paris has given out, and the city after sundown is in total darkness. The confusion consequent on this adds very manifestly to the horrors of the war. The darkness is favorable to the desertion of the besieged, and detachments of French soldiers are stationed at all outlets of the city to stop deserters.

With the surrender of Montmedy, 65 cannon and 3,000 prisoners fell into the hands of the Germans, and 236 German prisoners were released.

Proofs of the Prussian scheme for the restoration of the French Empire come from every quarter. Bismarck says this is the only way the war can end; that republican France will fight forever; that the fall of Paris can produce no effect; that the only course is to make terms with the Empire and go home, and leave the French to fight it out between themselves.

BISMARCK AS A DUKE.—Wolff telegraphs from Berlin on the 14th that Bismarck is to be made a Duke. The King wishes his title to be Duke of Strasbourg, but Bismarck wants to retain his own name.

BERLIN, Dec. 14.—The Provincial Correspondence of this morning, in an article on the progress of the war, says that the proposed bombardment of Paris has again been postponed, because such a course at present would be detrimental to the military operations. The real object of the war and the interests of the army at this juncture are of paramount consideration; and unquestionably, at the right moment, the commander of the investing army will take such action as will fully insure immediate and future success.

Paris letters of the 9th announce the situation as good. The repulse of the army of the Loire and the recapture of Orleans have not discouraged the Parisians. There is a general demand for more sorties and a universal approval of the answer sent by Gen. Trochu to Gen. Moltke, and the people all say they will resist to the last.

The measures taken by the government since the commencement of the siege are accepted willingly by the population. Having insured itself against waste of provisions, of which there are enough to last until February, the government will again issue fresh meat rations to the inhabitants. Other provisions are sufficient to last six months.

MADRID, Dec. 15.—It is said one of the first acts of King Amadeus, of Spain, will be to give one-half of the appanage of the Crown, amounting to some twenty millions of dollars, to the Treasury.

The Times of the 15th, in an editorial on the Luxembourg question, says it is not England's duty alone to resist the absorption of Luxembourg by Prussia, and thinks that perhaps Prussia may be satisfied with that acquisition and forego the taking of Lorraine from France. A Cabinet council will be held to-day, which is expected to define the attitude of England.

King William, of Holland, has telegraphed to the Government of Luxembourg, that he will defend the treaty of 1867, and the honor and independence of the Duchy. He also approves the acts of the Government of Luxembourg.

A despatch to the *Times*, dated Versailles 15, says the Luxembourg question will produce no complications here. Her independence is preserved unless she openly supports France.

KING WILLIAM AND THE POPE.—LONDON, Dec. 16.—Mr. Tandieu telegraphs on the 15th, that the Papal Envoy, M. Kogman, arrived at Versailles on the 12th inst., with important despatches from the Pope to Bismarck and the King. It is certain the King promised the Pope to restore to him his temporal power as soon as the present war ends. The official journal, the *Holk*, states that the King has also determined to restore Napoleon.

FLORENCE, Dec. 15.—In the Italian Parliament to-day, Senor Lanza made a powerful speech in support of the bill relative to the guarantees to be given to the Pope. He said the Catholic world demanded every guarantee which it was possible for Italy to concede.

A bill for the consideration of Papal debts was introduced.

To Make Cloth Water-proof.

A writer in an English journal says:—"By-the-way, touching water-proofs, I think I can give travellers a valuable hint or two. For many years I have worn India rubber water-proof; but I will buy no more, for I have learned that good Scottish tweed can be made completely impervious to rain, and, moreover, I have learned how to make it so; and for the benefit of my readers, I will here give the recipe:

"In a pail of soft water, put half a pound of sugar of lead, half a pound of lead and half a pound of alum; stir this at intervals until it becomes clear; then pour it off into another pail, and put the garment therein, and let it be in for twenty-four hours and then hang it up to dry without wringing it. Two of my party—a lady and gentleman—have worn garments thus treated in the wildest storm of wind and rain without getting wet. The rain hangs upon the cloth in globules; in short they are really water-proof.

"The gentleman, a fortnight ago, walked nine miles in a storm of wind and rain, such as you rarely see in the south, and when he slipped off his overcoat, his underclothes were as dry as when he put them on. This is, I think, a secret worth knowing; for cloth, if it can be made to keep out wet, is in every way better than what we know as water-proofs."

☞ The first velvet factory in the United States has just been started in Kansas.

DOWN A WELL.

AN INCIDENT OF THE WAR.

In a little village near Bazeilles, before the fall of Sedan and the occupation of the surrounding country by the Prussians, a party of Zouaves caught sight of a young officer of Hussars, who had ventured alone upon a daring reconnaissance, in advance of his party. They instantly gave chase. Our Hussar dashed away; but two or three light-heeled French soldiers rapidly ascended a piece of rising ground, and were able to bring down his horse with the far-ranging bullets of the Chassepot. The Hussar was presently made prisoner; and as he spoke French and complimented his captors in a jocular vein on their skill and celerity, the Zouaves at once became very friendly—gave him some wine and a cigar to smoke while they searched him. The only things they found in his pockets were a Dutch pipe, an empty tobacco pouch, an old knife, and a torn letter. Of course, none of the French knew a word of German, and were still less likely to decipher a word in the German handwriting; but, thinking it might contain something worth knowing, they ordered their prisoner to translate it for them—first making him go down upon his knees, and swear, upon his honor, to give them a faithful translation. He explained that the letter was from a brother officer in one of the new regiments, which had not yet been engaged; and that the part torn off had been for his pipe. He then read what remained:—

"The wagons with our rations are on the way, but we find them very slow. This is altogether a very hungry business. It began with hunger of the French for our lovely Rhine—"

Some execrations burst from his auditors, and the prisoner stopped; but was instantly ordered to go on.

"And this is really not surprising, because they once possessed it, and know what a beautiful country it is. But we all swear—do we not, my dear Ernst?—that never again shall French *frosch* hop on the banks of that lovely river."

The prisoner was here interrupted by a demand to be informed if the word *frosch* was of an insulting character; but, being assured that it was merely a philological form in natural history, he was allowed to proceed.

"The French are wofully off as to their generals. Only see how they send cavalry to attack our infantry and artillery in a wood! And this repeatedly. Then, they are continually surprised: one of the greatest faults, you know. Our officers are never surprised. MacMahon is a valiant fellow—not a first-rate general, but a good and honorable man—notwithstanding the out-and-out (*ganzlich*) thrashing we gave him. Besides that, we were always able to outwit (*uberlisten*) him by Von Moltke's art. Bazaine seems a very good and trustworthy man; so does Ulrich—but then he is far more German than French."

More execrations.

"As for the chief commander in Paris, what do you think of—

The unfortunate Hussar paused; but he was ordered to go on; and reminded, at the point of the bayonet, of his oath.

"What do you think of old Zu-viel Kobl?"

The Hussar explained that it was only a pun—a mere *jeu des mots*—not to be translated. Here one of the Zouaves cunningly insisted upon looking at that part of the letter; and then it was found that the Prussian correspondent had written his pun in French—

"What do you think of old *Trop-chou* (*too much cabbage!*")

Their great commander of Paris (Trochu) being thus designated as *too much of an old cabbage!*

Some of the Zouaves were for bayoneting or shooting their prisoner upon the spot. In vain the Hussar endeavored to make them see *he* had not written the letter—*he* had not made the offensive jest. It was a letter written *to*, and not *by* him. His enraged captors said they could not enter into any of these fine distinctions, and he should *therefore* be shot as a spy!

It appears that this very logical verdict would have led to the speedy execution of the luckless Hussar; but that one of the Zouaves suddenly called their attention, in a humorous way, to the fact that it was a promising pun for a Prussian; that such signs of wit in a barbarous, bear-swilling nation deserved some favor; that the offence was only committed by their prisoner at second-hand, because he had received and had not written the letter. This interposition was received with great laughter, and the punishment of the bullet or the bayonet was commuted by a proposal to lower the Hussar into a well.

This well, as they know, was at the present moment nearly empty. But rain was beginning to fall; and after rain the well generally became full even to the top. So down this well they lowered him—with many taunts and jokes, not unmingled with a few grim, yet not quite unkindly, pleasantries—our luckless Hussar, whose only error consisted in his patriotic daring, and in not destroying a friend's letter, which contained a "promising pun—for a Prussian!" on the name of the great Trochu.

Heavy rain fell soon after the Hussar was down; and one of the wags of his Zouave captors took the trouble to run several hundred yards to a garden, in order that he might return with a large cabbage, which he threw down the well, supplementing it with a few hasty words, in which the wit, the grossness, the recklessness of *all* lives, the *bonhomie*, and the self-devoting patriotism, struggled in vain for ascendancy. And so the victim was left. The heavy rain seemed likely to continue through the night; and the fate of the young Hussar was settled.

Of course it was settled. In the morning, when the Zouaves went to look at the well, they found it full. "*Pauvre diable!*" said one of them. And then another Zouave began to reason, and say that, after all, the young Prussian fellow could not help what his friend had written. And presently several of them said, "*Pauvre diable!*" And shortly afterwards they met the Hussar coming round a corner, shivering, and saying he had had "a cold night of it!"

The rain had caused the water to rise in the well, near to the very top; and the Hussar—having had the sense to make himself, from boyhood, a fine swimmer—had simply "trod water" for some two hours and a quarter, varied by resting with "suspension by the chin:" and, when the water rose to the top, he just stepped out. The delighted Zouaves were so delighted with the result and its explanation, that they took him to a room near at hand, made him warm "inside and out," and gave him a hint to slip round a corner of the house and be off, before the officer of the night watch got sight of him.

After the grave apocryphal manifesto of the Emperor Napoleon—not to speak of many of the telegrams—one does not know what to believe. We may doubt the authenticity of the above story; but, certainly, there is nothing in it at all improbable.

The Origin of Names.

We understand why certain fabrics are known as silk, linen, cotton, and woollen; as these clothes all take their name from the material of which they are manufactured.

But it may not be quite so clear to the young lady why her dainty ruffles are cambric, and only her cotton dresses are called calico or muslin. Nor to the bonnet-maker why lace, flowers, ribbons, etc., should be millinery, and herself a milliner.

Cambric, both linen and cotton, was first manufactured in Cambray, hence its name. Calico takes its name from Calicut, a place in India. Moussel, a city in Turkey, was noted for its elegant muslins; and claims the invention of that species of cotton goods.

So, also, the tasteful wares known as millinery, were first imported to Paris and London from Milan—accent on the first syllable—and were called Milanry. It is not impossible that the notable housekeeper, looking proudly at her spotless table linen, supposes that some peculiar twist in the thread makes it damask—at least we've heard it so explained. This linen, ornamented with figures and flowers, derives its name from Damascus, a place anciently celebrated, not alone for its manufactures of silk and linen, but for its wonderfully tempered steel, of which the unequalled Damascus blade was composed.

At first this cloth was made of silk and flax, and called Damascene. Afterwards of linen, and more recently of woollen and cotton; so that we have various kinds of damask.

We should like to know if our obliging "grocery man," as some people persist in calling grocer—"for short," we suppose—is troubled with weighty reflections as to the origin of his title.

Grocer, which means now a dealer in certain articles called groceries, was formerly applied to one who bought and sold only by the gross or wholesale. Johnson says it should be written grosser.

Supper, a term meaning exclusively the last meal of the day, was originally a simple meal of soup, taken at any time. And saucer was a dish for holding sauce, instead of a cup.

Countenance signifies the contents, or all the features of the face, with their expression; which should be truthful and kind; which will be when the heart is so. Nostril is from nose and thrill—to drill or pierce. In early editions of Spenser, this was printed nosethrill; and earlier, nosethrille.

It may be interesting to those who are in pursuit of the dollar, to know that this object of paramount importance, is named from the Danish word daler; and that from Dale, the town where it was first coined. Guinea is a coin so called because made formerly from the precious Guinea gold.

A boor has come to be a person destitute of culture and refinement. But there was a time when all not belonging to the nobility, were boors; which was then no more a term of reproach than "the common people" is now. In those days, the persons or boors whose habitations were near were nigh boors, which words, compressed into one send a neighbor down to posterity. Let us esteem ourselves fortunate, if the make-up of those dwelling near us, don't tempt us to go back to the original.

Little Winnie.

It was one of those raw and chilly days that sometimes come late in May; when but for the lengthened twilight and sunset of pale gold—so different from the crimson fires that autumn kindles on her evening hearth—we would think that winter frost instead of summer flowers lay just beyond.

House cleaning had been accomplished, and the stoves had vanished from the dining-room, and the grates in the large parlors were closed.

The ladies were shivering in their thick silks and spring alpacas; and we, thought to be of hardier make, found our heavy broadcloths none too warm.

But Winnie, our entertainer's little grandchild, was running about in her white muslin, with arms and shoulders bare. There was no danger; she was used to it. I heard them say so. She was the prettiest child I ever saw.

Her mother was a sad-eyed, sweet faced woman, dressed in deep mourning, who told me with quivering lips that Winnie was the last of four children.

I will not describe the supper which we took "by the light of a chandelier." The dream of Clarence might have been owing to a similar repast.

I looked with horror to see that child eating lobster salad and other deadly compounds at which strong men demur.

She drank tea from her mother's saucer; and I heard the tinkle of pearly teeth upon the white china, at which music the little fairly laughed, and drank again that she might hear.

And those women looked and applauded. One old dowager in stiff brocade held up both hands in admiration, saying "I'll die if I ever saw a baby eat like that before."

Was it a presentiment of coming evil? Something was the matter with me. The shadows took on a deeper hue. The flowers on the vases suddenly paled to funereal whiteness. These women seemed to be so many goblins and ghosts plotting the destruction of helpless innocents.

One week from that day I thought I understood those strange sensations, when I saw the silver key of the dead baby's casket placed in the cold fingers of the broken-hearted mother.

There was a profusion of black crape and white flowers. The minister spoke from the text, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,"—words true as beautiful, and fraught with holy meaning, though capable of misapplication.

Then, in the early days of her bereavement, friends gathered around the stricken mother. One sent, with words of condolence, "Poems of Hope and Consolation," and another the "Changed Cross." But I, in gloomy bitterness, remembering that last supper, for such it was to little Winnie, thought that a simple treatise on hygiene and physiology a few months previous might have been a gift more to the purpose.—*The Household.*

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE VICTORY OF THE VANQUISHED. A Story of the First Century. By the author of the "Chronicles of the Schonberg-Cotta Family," etc., etc. Published by Dodd & Mead, 762 Broadway, New York; and also for sale by Porter & Coates, Philada.

THE YELLOW MASK. A Novel. By WILKIE COLLINS, author of "The Woman in White," etc. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada.

THE ADVERTISER'S HAND-BOOK: Comprising a Complete List of all Newspapers, Periodicals and Magazines published in the United States and British Possessions. Arranged by Counties, with the population of Counties and Towns, separate lists of the Daily, Religious and Agricultural Newspapers, and a history of the Newspaper Press. Published by S. M. Pettengill & Co., Newspaper Adv. Agents, 37 Park Row, New York.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for January, 1871. Contains "A Year in a Venetian Palace," "The Fugitive," "Miss Moggaridge's Provider," "The Valley of Gastein," "Madam Delia's Expectations," "Castilian Days," "Our Eyes, and how to take care of them," "The Sisters," "Dorothy Q," and other articles and poems. Published by Fields, Osgood & Co., Boston.

THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER OF THE AMERICAN LITERARY GAZETTE AND PUBLISHERS' CIRCULAR. A Complete List of Illustrated and other Books, suitable for Presentation and Rewards. Published by George W. Childs, Philada. It is almost as good as having the books themselves to look over these tempting notices and beautiful illustrations.

PUNCHINELLO. Published by the Punchinello Publishing Co., New York. Full of some funny and some not very funny things, as usual. On the whole, pretty good.

How They Bathe at Venice.

BY W. D. HOWELLS.

Here I am reminded of another pleasure of modern dwellers in Venetian palaces, which could hardly have been indulged in by the patricians of old, and which is hardly imaginable by people of this day, whose front doors open upon dry land. I mean to say the privilege of sea-bathing from one's own threshold. From the beginning of June till far into September all the canals of Venice are populated by the amphibious boys, who clamor about in the brine, or poise themselves for a leap from the tops of bridges, or show their fine, statuesque figures, bronzed by the ardent sun, against the facades of empty palaces, where they hover among the marble sculptures, and meditate a headlong plunge. It is only the Venetian ladies, in fact, who do not share this healthful amusement. Fathers of families, like so many plump, domestic drakes, lead forth their aquatic broods, teaching the little ones to swim by the aid of various floats, and delighting in the gambols of the larger ducklings. When the tide comes in fresh and strong from the sea the water in the Grand Canal is pure and refreshing; and at these times is is a singular pleasure to leap from one's door-step into the swift current, and spend a half-hour, very informally, among one's neighbors there. The Venetian bathing-dress is a mere sketch of the pantaloons of ordinary life; and when I used to stand upon our balcony, and see some bearded head ducking me a polite salutation from a pair of broad, brown shoulders that showed above the water, I was not always able to recognise my acquaintance, deprived of his factitious identity of clothes. But I always knew a certain stately consul-general by a vast expanse of baldness upon the top of his head; and it must be owned, I think, that this form of social assembly was, with all its disadvantages, a novel and vivacious spectacle. The Venetian ladies, when they bathed, went to the Lido, or else to the bath-houses in front of the Ducal Palace, where they saturated themselves a good part of the day, and drank coffee, and, possibly, gossiped.—*Atlantic Monthly.*

English Fruits and Vegetables.

Are the fruits and vegetables really so poor and meagre in England. Hawthorne complained that no English fruit equalled in flavor a home-grown turnip. Other Americans testify to the small supply—the lack of variety. A friend, who lived some time in lodgings in London, say they grew very tired of their day-after-day cauliflower and potatoes. (Turnips had been ruled out from the first.) Finally she appealed desperately to the cook, when she came one morning, as usual, for instructions: "But cannot we have some other vegetable? Is there really nothing to be found but potatoes and cauliflower?" Cook considered deeply for a moment, then emerged with the triumphant suggestion, "I might *mash* the potatoes, mum!" The same lady declares that, visiting at a country-house near London, she really felt a delicacy about eating freely the dozen or so strawberries assigned her, so very inadequate did the quantity for general use look to her—hardly more than one person's portion in her own home. Another lady reports that, staying somewhere in England at a friend's, one cantelope—the one identical melon—served *three* days as dessert, being each day carefully removed from table to some cool place. Our American fashion of sitting down around the great rough basket holding nearly a bushel of this fruit, and then and there "going through" it, rejecting all save the spiciest and most saccharine specimens, must seem somewhat massive in the eyes of our English cousins. —*Galaxy.*

A BOSTON girl asks the following pertinent questions of other Boston girls:—"Could you love a man who wore false hair on his head, when he had enough of his own? Who painted his face and improved his form as you improve (?) yours? Who pinched his feet with small shoes, his hands with small gloves, his waist with corsets; and then, as if he had not already deformed himself enough, tied a huge bustle to his back, and thrust tiny mountains of wire into his bosom?" The Revolution responds to these questions by others, addressed to young men, as follows: Could you love a girl who defiled her mouth with tobacco and loaded the air with fumes of cigars? Who staggered home several times a week the worse for liquor? Who indulged in fast horses, bet high at races, and swaggered around the streets with questionable companions? "Which picture wears the most alluring colors?"

☞ A very polite Frenchman, being asked why he applauded so vehemently at the close of a wretched performance, truthfully replied:—"*Mon Dieu!* because it is ended."

A Working Suit for Farmers.

Farmers and mechanics need some kind of a substantial working dress—one that is cheaply made and easily put on and comfortably worn. It is very expensive working in a good suit of clothes and exposing them to the various kinds of labor incident to farm life. Put on a pair of new pants and get into an apple tree to trim or graft it, or go to repairing fences and you will be sure to make a rent in them before they are a day old. Such a thing rarely happens to an old pair. We invented a dress several years since which we have used and recommended to others much to their satisfaction. It is a sleeve vest closed in front, and trowsers in one piece, with only one fastening with a strap behind the neck. The sleeve may be made sufficiently large enough to wear over a coat. The material should be of blue drilling.

Thus at a trifling expense a man can be readily fitted to grapple with any kind of work without a constant fear of tearing or soiling his clothes, while the cost is not one-tenth part of a suit of ordinary clothing. It will often be found convenient to wear in hot weather without any other clothing than a shirt. Any clever housekeeper who can make a pair of summer pants, can make one of these most useful articles. The only difficulty usually is not buying cloth enough to have them made sufficiently large. The suit should be large enough to wear over other garments, if necessary, and when the day's work is done it may be removed, others substituted, and the farmer is in complete trim to sit down of an evening dressed in clean clothes and ready to engage in conversation, reading, or any other amusement suited to a rational and intelligent mind. The cost of such a suit is trifling, and is more than made up by what it saves of other clothes.—*Maine Farmer.*

Conscious Dreaming.

One of the peculiarities of my dreams is, that I am never absorbed in them entirely. I never lose the conviction that I am dreaming, and whatever visionary troubles befall me, I know that they will come to a speedy end—a comfortable assurance, since my dreams are almost invariably bad. If I am hotly pursued by a wild beast or an irresistible foe, I throw myself, as I suppose, on the ground, and covering my face with my hands, by a violent action of the will, force myself into wakefulness.

I will give a curious instance of my peculiarity in this respect. In the course of one of my dreams, I was brought as a captive into the presence of some Algerian despot, who sat on a throne, with a numerous body of soldiers on each side of him, and who menaced me with horrible tortures. I listened patiently, and when his discourse was ended, I said with perfect calmness:

"This is very well now; but you are perfectly aware that when I open my eyes, you and your soldiers will all go to the—"

Evidently the nail had been hit on the head. The soldiers nudged each other, and uneasily exchanged significant winks, indicating that I had discovered the secret of nothingness. The sultan or dey (whichever he was) looked crestfallen, but put on as good a face as he could, and said with evident reluctance: "Well, you may go." I left the spot with the utmost insolence, snapping my fingers at the soldiers, who, as I passed them, stared at me with the most intense expression of awe. Soon afterwards I awoke.—*Confession of a Dreamer.*

THE CHINESE.—It is reported that a Chinese Immigration Agency has been established in New York, and that contracts have already been entered into to supply several hundred Chinese laborers to prominent manufacturers in New England and the Middle States. The laborers are supplied in any number from ten upwards, under contracts to serve for two and three years, for $26 gold per month, and a suitable building for them to cook, eat, and sleep in. The employers are to supply the tools suitable for the trade at which the Chinese are to be employed, and are to allow Sundays and two holidays in addition in each year. The men engaged to work ten hours a day.

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—7000 bbls sold in lots at prices ranging from $4.50@5, for superfine; $4.75@5.50 for extra; $5.50@6.50 for Northwest family; $6@6.50 for Penna family; $6.25@7 for Ohio and Indiana family, and $7.50@8.50 ₱ bbl for fancy brands. Rye Flour sells at $5@5.25 ₱ bbl.

GRAIN—Wheat—30,000 bus sold at $1.42@1.43 for Indiana red, $1.25@1.28 for Penna red, $1.15@1.20 for Delaware red, $1.45@1.50 for amber, and $1.50@1.60 ₱ bus for white. Rye—Sales of 3500 bus at 90@93c ₱ bus. Corn—Sales of 70,000 bus at 68@70c for new mixed, 70@73c for new yellow, and 78@80c ₱ bus for old yellow. Oats—Sales of 50,000 bus at 52@52c for mixed and black, and 55@56c ₱ bus for white Penna and Western.

PROVISIONS—Sales of new Mess Pork at $20@20.50; clear at $22, and extra prime at $16. Mess Beef at $20.50@21 ₱ bbl for city packed extra mess. Beef Hams may be quoted at $30 ₱ bbl. Bacon—Sales of sugar-cured city smoked Hams at 16@18c; Excelsior Hams at 20c; Sides at 15c, and Shoulders at 13c. Green Meats—Sales of Pickled Hams at 13@14c, Sides 12c; Shoulders, in salt, 7½@8c. Lard—Sales of 400 bbls and tcs at 13@13½c for steam and kettle rendered. Butter—Sales of inferior packed at 15@17c; Pennsylvania store-packed at 30@31c, and roll at 35@35c ₱ lb. Eggs sell at 32@34c ₱ doz. Cheese sells at 15@16½c ₱ lb.

COTTON—Sales of 450 bales Middlings at 15½@15½c for Uplands, and 16@16½c for New Orleans.

BARK—No. 1 Quercitron sold at $35 ₱ ton. Tanners' Bark at $18@20 ₱ cord for Chestnut and Spanish Oak.

BEESWAX sells at 32@33c ₱ lb for yellow.

FRUIT—Dried Apples and Peaches—Sales at 4@7½c for Apples and 9@9c ₱ lb for half Peaches. Green Apples sell at $1.50@3 ₱ bbl. Cranberries sell at $9@12 ₱ bbl.

HAY—Prime Timothy Hay, ₱ 100 lbs, $1,10@1,15; mixed do, $1@1,05; Straw, $1,05@1,10.

IRON—Pig Iron—Sales of No. 1 at $21@22. No 2 at $19,50@20. Bar Iron sells at $75@77,50 ₱ ton. Scotch Pig sells at $22 ₱ ton.

SEEDS—Cloverseed—1600 bushels sold at 10½@11c ₱ lb. Timothy—Sales at $4.75@5. Flaxseed at $2@2,10.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKETS.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 3450 head. The prices realized from 8½@9½c ₱ lb. 200 Cows brought from $45 to 80 ₱ head. Sheep—16,000 head were disposed of at from 5@6c ₱ lb. 3500 Hogs sold at from $9,00 to 9,50 ₱ 100 lbs.

Interesting to Ladies.

"It gives me great pleasure to add to the many satisfactory testimonials of the Grover & Baker Sewing Machines, having had one in use six years, which works as well to-day as the first day I had it. I am persuaded that it is the best, easiest worked and most durable machine now in use."—*Mrs. E. M. Cooper, Lewisburg, Pa.*

MAKE YOUR OWN SOAP

One Pound of Crampton's Imperial Laundry Soap will make twelve quarts of Handsome Soft Soap. Ask your Grocer for it and Try it. CRAMPTON BROTHERS, 84 Front St., New York.

oct1-tf

HEALTH! BEAUTY!!

STRONG, PURE AND RICH BLOOD, INCREASE OF FLESH AND WEIGHT, CLEAR SKIN AND BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION SECURED TO ALL.

RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT HAS MADE THE MOST ASTONISHING CURES.

SO QUICK, SO RAPID ARE THE CHANGES THE BODY UNDERGOES UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THIS TRULY WONDERFUL MEDICINE, THAT EVERY DAY AN INCREASE IN FLESH AND WEIGHT IS SEEN AND FELT.

Scrofula, Consumption,
Glandular Disease,
Ulcers in the Throat and Mouth,
Tumors, Nodes in the Glands,
And other parts of the system,
Sore Eyes,
Strumous diseases of the Eyes, Nose, Mouth,

And the worst forms of Skin Diseases,
Eruptions, Fever Sores, Scald Head,
Ring Worm, Salt Rheum, Erysipelas,
Acne, Black Spots,
Worms in the Flesh, Tumors,
Cancers in the Womb,
And all Kidney, Bladder, Urinary and

Womb Diseases, Gravel, Diabetes,
Dropsy, Stoppage of Water,
Incontinence of Urine,
Bright's Disease,
Weakness and Painful Discharges,
Night Sweats,
Are within the curative range of

RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT,

and a few days' use will prove to any person using it for either of these forms of disease, its potent power to cure them.

ONE DOLLAR A BOTTLE.

Principal office 87 Maiden Lane, New York.
Sold by Druggists. oct1-tf

The Great Pictorial Annual.

Hostetter's United States Almanac for 1871, for distribution, *gratis*, throughout the United States, and all civilized countries of the Western Hemisphere, will be published about the first of January, and all who wish to understand the true philosophy of health should read and ponder the valuable suggestions it contains. In addition to an admirable medical treatise on the causes, prevention and cure of a great variety of diseases, it embraces a large amount of information interesting to the merchant, the mechanic, the miner, the farmer, the planter, and professional man; and the calculations have been made for such meridians and latitudes as are most suitable for a correct and comprehensive NATIONAL CALENDAR.

The nature, uses, and extraordinary sanitary effects of HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS, the staple tonic and alterative of more than half the Christian world, are fully set forth in its pages, which are also interspersed with pictorial illustrations, valuable recipes for the household and farm, humorous anecdotes, and other instructive and amusing reading matter, original and selected.—Among the Annuals to appear with the opening of the year, this will be one of the most useful, and *may be had for the asking.* The proprietors, Messrs. Hostetter & Smith, on receipt of a two cent stamp, will forward a copy by mail to any person who cannot procure one in his neighborhood. The Bitters are sold in every city, town and village, and are extensively used throughout the entire civilized world.

dec3-5t

To Cure a Cough, Cold or Sore Throat, use *BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES.*

nov26-6m

A Young Wife's Request.

Wife—Charley, I wish when you come up to-night you'd stop into your druggist's and get me a bottle of PLANTATION BITTERS. Be sure to get the genuine.

Charley—What in the world, Mary, are you going to do with Plantation Bitters?

Wife—Everybody that I know is in ecstacy over Plantation Bitters, and I am going to try them myself. I am assured by several of my friends that the Bitters will cure my dyspepsia, and at the same time do away with that terrible nausea which you know I am at times subject to. The doctor was in yesterday, and says that all I want is a tonic, and that Plantation Bitters is the best that can be got.

Charley—It is just the thing, my dear; and it is strange that I had not thought of it before.

EVA MOSS FARINE from pure Irish Moss, for blanc mange, puddings, custards, creams, &c., &c. The cheapest, healthiest, and most delicious food in the world.

MARRIAGES.

☞ Marriage notices must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 7th instant, by the Rev. William Cathcart, Mr. ALONZO F. COTTON to Miss MARY A. BARNES, both of this city.

On the 7th instant, by the Rev. W. C. Robinson, Mr. LINDLEY M. ELKINTON to Miss JENNIE HUTT, both of this city.

On the 8th instant, by John G. Wilson, V. D. M., FRANCIS REIHL to ELIZA LENTZ, both of this city.

In September, by the Rev. J. B. Peters, Mr. GEORGE R. TOURISON to Miss SALLIE J. KING, both of this city.

On the 7th instant, by the Rev. Wm. B. Wood, Mr. DAVID R. BENNETT to Miss MARY A. ROBEY, both of this city.

On the 10th instant, by the Rev. Geo. Bringhurst, Mr. SAMUEL BAILEY to Miss HARRIET LUTZ, both of this city.

DEATHS.

☞ Notices of Deaths must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 12th instant, Mrs. SARAH H. SUPLEE, in her 44th year.

On the 13th instant, CORINNA E. SHOEMER, aged 36 years.

On the 12th instant, EMMELINE CORNELL, aged 33 years.

On the 13th instant, HENRY D. HAVENS, in his 37th year.

On the 12th instant, SARAH A. CLIFFORD, in her 78th year.

On the 11th instant, ANNA MARY, wife of Ashland Beckett, in her 30th year.

On the 14th instant, EDWIN T. S. LENTZ, in his 27th year.

On the 10th instant, Mrs. MARY STEVENSON, in her 69th year.

On the 10th instant, HENRY H. MEARS, in his 74th year.

On the 9th instant, Mrs. HARRIET M. LAWRENCE, in her 49th year.

THE COMING YEAR.

We may note especially among our arrangements for the coming year, a new story called

DENE HOLLOW,

By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Bessy Rane," &c.

We may add that it is always the aim of Mrs. Wood, in her stories, to combine a high degree of interest with the inculcation of some moral lesson. And it is this which renders her stories such favorites with the great majority of readers. Those who speak of her as a merely "sensational" writer, simply have caught up a parrot cry, and show their utter ignorance of her works.

Early in January, we design commencing a

STORY OF ADVENTURE,

By GUSTAVE AIMARD, author of "The Queen of the Savannah," "Last of the Incas," &c.

Aimard writes a stirring story, full of thrilling incidents by flood and field, of hair-breadth escapes, &c., in which both his heroes and his heroines take part.

In addition to these, of course, we shall give a succession of other stories, both original and selected, of the usual excellent quality.

But the desire of THE POST is always to combine instruction with amusement, solid intellectual meats and bread and potatoes with its pies, preserves and puddings. We aim also to give, therefore, during the coming year,

INSTRUCTIVE ARTICLES

on a great variety of subjects, original, and selected from all quarters. We should be sorry to have our readers say that they had perused a single number of THE POST without being wiser in some respect than they were before.

TERMS.

We are still able to offer all *NEW* subscribers

3 MONTHS FOR NOTHING,

beginning their subscriptions for 1871 with the paper of October 8th, which contains the beginning of LEONIE'S MYSTERY, by Frank Lee Benedict. This is

THIRTEEN PAPERS

IN ADDITION to the regular weekly numbers for 1871, or

FIFTEEN MONTHS IN ALL!

WE HAVE A GOODLY SUPPLY OF BACK NUMBERS STILL ON HAND.

This offer applies to all NEW subscribers, single or in clubs. See our low Terms:

One copy (and a Premium Steel Engraving)	$2.50
2 copies,	4.00
4 "	8.00
7 " (and one extra)	13.00
8 " (and one extra)	16.00
11 " (and one extra)	20.00
14 " (and one extra)	25.00
One copy of THE POST and one of THE LADY'S FRIEND,	4.00

Every person getting up a Club will receive one of the large Steel-Plate Premium Engravings—and for Clubs of 5 and over both a Premium Engraving and an Extra paper.

Our last Premium Engraving is "THE SISTERS"—a perfect Gem. The others are "Taking the Measure of the Wedding Ring," "The Song of Home at Sea," "Washington at Mount Vernon," "Edward Everett in his Library," and "One of Life's Happy Hours." Either of these engravings will be sent, as desired. If no directions are given, "The Sisters" will be sent.

☞ *Club Subscribers* who wish a Premium Engraving must send *one dollar extra*. To those who are not subscribers we will furnish them for *two dollars*. All these engravings are done on Steel—they are not wood-cuts or lithographs.

TO OLD SUBSCRIBERS.

Cannot each of you, taking advantage of the above liberal offers, make up a Club of NEW subscribers? To the getter-up of every Club we send our beautiful new Premium Engraving "THE SISTERS," (or either of our other Premium Engravings); and to the getter-up of a Club of five or over, an extra copy of THE POST, (or of THE LADY'S FRIEND) besides. Where the Clubs are composed of both old and new subscribers, the latter should have the word "new" written opposite their names. The subscriptions should be sent on as soon as obtained (even when the lists, if large, are not full,) in order that the forwarding of the paper to the new subscribers may not be delayed.

Special Offer of Lady's Friend.

ONE MONTH FOR NOTHING!

All NEW Subscribers (single or in clubs) to THE LADY'S FRIEND who send on their subscriptions by the first of January, shall receive the magnificent December Holiday number, making *thirteen months in all!*

Sewing Machine Premium, &c.

—See terms on the second page of this paper

The Shark.

[SEE ENGRAVING ON FIRST PAGE.]

The Shark is said to attain the length of twenty and even thirty feet; but its size is not its worst attribute. Ferocious, voracious, impetuous, and insatiable, spread over almost every climate, an inhabitant of every sea, the shark rapidly pursues every fish; and threatens with its wide gullet the unfortunate victims of shipwreck, shutting them out from all hope of safety.

The body of the shark is long, and its skin is studded with small tubercles: this skin becomes so hard, and takes so high a polish, that it is employed for various ornamental purposes. This resisting power protects the shark from the bites of every inhabitant of the sea, if there be any daring enough to approach it with that view.

The back and sides of the shark are of an ashy brown; beneath it is faded white. The head is flat, and terminates in a muzzle slightly rounded. Its terrible mouth is in the form of a semicircle, and of enormous size; the contour of the upper jaw of a shark of ten yards length being about two yards wide, and its throat being of proportionate diameter to this monstrous opening. When the throat of the animal is open we see beyond the lips, which are straight and of the consistence of leather, certain plates of teeth which are triangular, dentate, and white as ivory. If the shark is an adult, it has in the upper as in the lower jaw six rows of these murderous arms, an arsenal ready to tear and rend its victim. These teeth take different motions according to the will of the animal, and obedient to the muscles round their base, by means of which it can erect or retract its various rows of teeth; it can even erect a portion of any row, while the others remain at rest in their bed. Thus this far-seeing tyrant of the ocean knows how to measure the number and power of the arms necessary to destroy its prey; for the destruction of the weak and defenceless one row of teeth suffices; for the more formidable adversary it has a whole arsenal at command.

The eyes of the shark are small, and nearly round; the iris of a deep green, the eyeball, shaped in a transversal slit, is bluish; its scent is very subtle; its fins are strong and rough. The tail is possessed of immense power, and is capable of breaking the limb of a robust man by a single stroke.

The shark, as soon as born, becomes the scourge of the sea. He seizes all that come near him. He eats the cuttle-fish, mollusks, and fishes; among others, flounders and cod-fish. But the prey which has the greatest charm for him is man; the shark loves him dearly, but it is with the affection of the gourmand. It even manifests, according to some authors, a preference to certain races. If we may believe some travellers, when several varieties of human food comes in its way, the shark prefers the European to the Asiatic, and both to the negro. Still, whatever may be the color, he seeks eagerly for human flesh, and haunts the neighborhood where it hopes to find the precious morsel. He follows the ship in which his instinct tells him it is to be found, and makes extraordinary efforts to reach it. He has been known to leap into a boat in order to seize the frightened fishermen; he throws himself upon the ship, cleaving the waves at full speed, to snap up some unhappy sailor who has shown himself beyond the bulwarks. He follows the course of the slaver, ready to engulf the negroes' corpses as they are thrown into the sea. Commerson relates a significant fact bearing on the subject. The corpse of a negro had been suspended from a yard-arm twenty feet above the level of the sea. A shark was seen to make many efforts to reach the body, and it finally succeeded in seizing it, member by member, undisturbed by the cries of the horror-stricken crew assembled on deck to witness the strange spectacle. In order that an animal so large and heavy should be able to throw itself to this height, the muscles of the tail and posterior parts of the body must have an astonishing power.

The mouth of the shark being placed in the lower part of the head, it becomes necessary to turn itself round in the water before it can seize the object which is placed above him. He meets with men bold enough to profit by this conformation, and chase this formidable and ferocious creature. On the African coast the negroes attack the shark in his own element, swimming towards him, and seizing the moment when he turns himself to rip up his belly with a sharp knife. This act of courage and audacity cannot, however, be said to be shark-fishing. The fishing operation is conducted as follows:—Choosing a dark night, a hook is prepared by burying it in a piece of lard, and attaching it to a long and solid wire chain; the shark looks askance at his prey, feels it, then leaves it; he is tempted by withdrawing the bait, when he follows, and swallows it gluttonously. He now tries to sink into the water, but, checked by the chain, he struggles and fights. By-and-by he gets exhausted, and the chain is drawn up in such a manner as to raise the head out of the water. Another cord is now thrown out with a running knot or loop, in which the body of the shark is caught about the origin of the tail. Thus bound, the captured shark is soon hoisted on deck, as represented in our engraving. On the quarter-deck of the ship he is put to death, not without great precaution, however, for he is still a formidable foe, from his terrible bites and from the still dangerous blows of his tail. Moreover, he dies hard, and long resists the most formidable wounds.

We have thus painted the portrait of the shark. The original is by no means beautiful; but, frightful as it may be, our description would be incomplete if we did not add that divine honors have been granted to this monster of the waters. Man worships force; he knows the hand which crushes, the teeth which rend. He respects the master or the king who strikes, and he venerates the shark. The inhabitants of several parts of the African coast worship the shark; they call it their *joujou*, and consider its stomach the road to heaven. Three or four times in the year they celebrate the festival of the shark, which is done in this wise.

They all move in their boats to the middle of the river, where they invoke, with the strangest ceremonies, the protection of the great shark. They offer to him poultry and goats, in order to satisfy his sacred appetite. But this is nothing; an infant is every year sacrificed to the monster, which has been reared for the purpose from its birth; it is fed and nourished for the sacrifice from its birth to the age of ten. On the day of the fete it is bound to a post on a sandy point at low water; as the tide rises, the child may utter cries of horror, but it is abandoned to the waves, and the sharks arrive. The mother is not far off; perhaps she weeps, but she dries her tears and thinks that her child has entered heaven through this horrible gate.

The Last of the Sibyls.

There lived in a remote street of Paris, last November, a woman aged ninety-seven years. Her name was Adelaide Lenormand. She was born in Alençon, Normandy, in 1772. From 1791, never having been married, never associated with any other person in her peculiar vocation, never giving occasion for scandal, never the object of police espionage, and never but once subjected to rigorous interrogatories at the *Palais de Justice*, she practiced the arts of astrology and palmistry for more than sixty years, having for patrons the celebrities of Europe, with a success unequaled since the Middle Ages. From the first she rose rapidly into note. Her study of Algebra and astronomy, which she believed indispensable to her art, was incessant. Once, indeed, she became involved in one of the countless plots for the liberation of Marie Antoinette from the Temple Prison, and was incarcerated in the Luxembourg; but she said her life was safe, and Robespierre's fall leaving her unguillotined, showed that she had read the book of fate as truly for herself as she did for others.

It was in the Luxembourg that she met with Josephine Beauharnais. Josephine had once had her fortune told by an Obi woman in Martinique; she now had it done by Mademoiselle Lenormand. The black and white sibyl spelled her destinies alike. The guillotine's tooth was not on edge for *her* neck. Life and greatness were before her. And when, two years afterward, the Creole widow married the young artillery officer, and told him of her gifted prison companion, and of the dazzling promises of her own horoscope, he himself consulted Lenormand, and received from her lips the augury of the career he was destined to run—his elevation to the summit of power, fall, and death in exile. Whether influenced by the thought that she who had predicted would not fail to endeavor to compass his downfall, or by other motives, from the day Napoleon I. donned the imperial purple, he refused to see the Norman prophetess. It was at his suggestion that interrogatories were put to her, December 11, 1809, at the *Palais de Justice*, when, being pressed to explain an obscure answer she had given, she replied: "My answer is a problem, the solution of which I reserve TILL MARCH 31, 1814." On that day the allied armies entered Paris.

On the 28th of March, 1814, President von Malchus, as he was called—a Prussian diplomatist who sixty years ago played a considerable part in European affairs—was prevailed on by the following circumstance to visit Mademoiselle Lenormand. He was associated with Count Morio in remodeling the royal household of Westphalia. The business necessitated frequent interviews at the house of the President. Every day, after the lapse of about an hour, the Count became uneasy, and showed anxiety to terminate the sitting and return home. This impatience was quite inexplicable to his colleague, who one day asked him the reason.

"My wife," replied Morio, "is in terror if I am absent a moment longer than usual."

"And why?" inquired Malchus.

Morio then related that the Countess had had her nativity once cast by Mademoiselle Lenormand, who had told her she would be married three times. Her first husband would be a new acquaintance, a lover whose love she reciprocated, by whom her highest wish would be gratified—the prospect of motherhood. She would soon, after a fire, receive a distinguished guest in her house, and not long after lose her husband by a violent death. Married a second time she would return to her native country, where she would in a short time lose her second husband and marry a third.

"Come, *Monsieur le Ministre*," continued the Count, "do me the honor to accompany me home, and see for yourself." Malchus complied, and found the Countess in a state of suffering which her husband had not at all exaggerated. When she learned that he had been made acquainted with the ground of her apprehensions, she said:

"You can judge, then, whether I have cause to tremble for my husband's life. In every other particular the prophecy has been verified. I did not know him nor he me; our marriage was of love; I am likely to become a mother; the fire has happened, and the distinguished guest been received. Do you wonder when I fear that a violent death to my husband is now near?"

The President did what he could to tranquillize the lady, assuring her that with him, at least, the Count was safe, and that one more meeting would terminate the business which took her husband away from her.

The next day, Morio was with the President until eleven o'clock, and then rode out with the King. As they passed, on their return, through the royal mews, Morio was detained, and the King went on. On a sudden a shot was fired. The Countess heard it, and shrieked out: "My husband is killed!" It was too true. A French farrier, whom Morio had discharged for drunkenness, had maliciously killed him.

This occurrence made a deep impression on Malchus. When he arrived in Paris, shortly after, he heard the name of Lenormand everywhere. She had predicted to Murat that he would be a King; to a Spanish officer that one week from that day he would hear of his brother's death in Spain; to the Countess Bocholz that she would marry a Prince of the blood; to Dr. Spangenberg, Queen's physician, that he would receive certain important news next day, and that two days after the messenger bringing it would be drowned—and one knows not what beside. Every prediction was said to have proved true. Over-urged by friends, the President visited the divineress. We translate his account from his own words:

"I was glad to find that the street in which she lived was one where I had never been. I put on a threadbare surtout and shabby hat, and drove to her door. A little girl answered the bell. 'Can I see Mademoiselle Lenormand?' 'Not to-day.' 'Ask her when?' In a moment a large woman, advanced in years, with peculiar subtility of eyes, came to the hall, and without speaking, put into my hands a card, on which was penciled, '*Samedi, trois heures, monsieur.*' She hardly saw me half a second, and I had not opened my lips in her presence.

"Saturday came, and I was there in the same dress, punctually at three o'clock. As I was entering, a young woman, leaning upon the arm of an elderly man, passed out, nervously weeping. Ushered in, I took my seat upon one side of a little table, Mademoiselle Lenormand being *vis-a-vis*, and laid down four napoleons. She then asked me:

"1. The initial letter of my Christian name.

"2. That of my surname.

"3. Of my country.

"4. Of the place of my birth.

"5. My age, and, if possible, day, hour, and minute of my birth.

"6. Name of my favorite flower.

"7. Name of my favorite animal.

"8. Name of animal of greatest repugnance to me.

"She now took fourteen packs of cards—some playing cards, others marked with necromantic figures and signs of celestial bodies—and shuffling each pack, asked me to cut them. Offering my right hand, she prevented me, saying, '*La main gauche, monsieur.*' Out of each pack I drew a number of cards, which she arranged in order. She then surveyed the palm of my left hand attentively, turned to a book of open hands, selecting one, studied the cards before her, and then began to tell me of my past, present, and future. Of the first she certainly told me much that could not be known even by my nearest friends, much that had almost passed from my own memory. Of the second, she told me with the same accuracy. Of the future, there was sibylline obscurity about some things; about others, clearness and unambiguity. For example: I had spoken of leaving Paris in two days. '*Vous resterez encore deux mois a Paris!*' she replied, fixing her eyes on mine. I might mention a score of similar remarks where she was equally positive and correct. In short, at a distance of five years from the time of the interview, I frankly state that not one of her predictions, reasonably to be expected within that time, has failed."

Talma, Madame de Staël, Mademoiselle George, and Horace Vernet have each at different times given accounts of interviews with Mademoiselle Lenormand, agreeing that her predictions were not at random. Of the last she said, in 1809, that within thirty years he would stand so high as an artist that the King of France would send him to Africa to paint the storming of a fortress there; which took place in 1839. As she had told Napoleon of his exile, she foretold Murat the place and time of his death twenty years before it occurred. The Duchess of Courland, a lady well known in the fashionable world of her day, whose youngest daughter married Talleyrand's nephew, sanctions an account more remarkable than that of President Malchus, but there is no time to refer to it here.

Turn we now to another branch of Mademoiselle Lenormand's wonderful skill in occult science. Her oracular divinations of lucky numbers in a lottery threw other exploits into the shade. She once declared to Potier, the comic actor, that one, two, and even three prizes were assigned by destiny to every man; but that she could not tell when and where any person's fortunate numbers were, without inspecting his hand. Potier, very naturally, asked what his own fortunate numbers were. Looking into his left hand and consulting her books, she replied: "Mark the numbers 9, 11, 37, and 85; stake on these—but not sooner than sixteen years hence—in the Imperial Lottery at Lyons, and you will obtain a *quaterne*." This was in 1810. In 1826 Potier remembered the prediction, staked on the four numbers the sorceress had named, and added a fifth, 37, the number of his birthday. Old people in Paris talk to this day of the sensation produced when the five numbers Potier had set his money upon were drawn. He won 250,000 francs—a sum which made a rich man of him, and when he died, in 1840, his heirs divided a million and a half.

Potier's good luck excited the desires of Tribet, an actor of few talents, but of many children. He flew to Lenormand; but she declined to answer. He besought her on his knees; but she remained inflexible. Mademoiselle refused his hand, indeed; but only shook her head in silence, and left him. Tribet followed—represented how poor he was—declared that his happiness was in Lenormand's hands—and urged that he was father of ten children, whom he could not educate, and about whose future he was in despair. The Sibyl replied: "Do not desire to know your numbers; if fortunate, you will abandon your profession, become a gambler, beggar your family, and commit suicide at last." Tribet bound himself by a solemn oath that he would never again play, and still continued to entreat. Overcome by the poor man's earnestness, Lenormand at length said: "I will tell you the numbers. More than that, I will tell you that one of them denotes the year of your death. It is 28. Another is 13, your name festival; a third, 66, is the number of your star. There is still another number that is full of good luck for you, but—you once wounded yourself on the stage."

"I did so twelve years ago."

"Well, since the wound, that number cannot be traced in your hand."

"But I know it," replied Tribet. "It is 7—a remarkable number to me all my life. At seven years of age, I came to Paris—seven weeks after, I entered the Royal Institute—at three times seven years old, I fell in love—my salary is 700 livres—and a man at number 7, on the *boulevard*, told me to come to you. It is my fortunate number."

"Good! Choose, then, 7 for you *quaterne*: very likely this number will win also."

Tribet staggered from her presence like one drunk with joy. But he had not money enough to stake a large sum; and the prophetess had declared, as she did in all cases, that to stake borrowed money would not answer. The poor actor had only twenty francs. He staked the whole. *Tirage* arrived. Each of the four numbers came out, not one failing. Tribet, who, the day before, had not a sou, found himself the possessor of 96 000 francs. He was mad with delight; he rushed, hatless, through the streets; he told every one he met that he had become a capitalist, and he took a box at the theatre, to hear himself play. What Lenormand had prophesied came to pass. Good luck crazed him. He abandoned his family, left for London, became a constant guest at the hazard table, lost, committed suicide, and his body was recovered from the Thames. All this, too, in 1828!—the number she predicted as the year of his death.

This event was a terrible shock to Lenormand. She called herself Tribet's murderess, execrated her art, and for more than a year after steadily refused to divine numbers for the lottery.

In 1830, however, the following circumstances occurred:—A man, one day, hastily entered her cabinet, stating himself to be Pierre Arthur, a printer, and begging her intercession with Monsieur Jerome, his creditor, who was pursuing him with bailiffs. Jerome, with his attendants, followed him into the house. Lenormand readily undertook the office of intercessor, and appealed to the usurer's compassion. It was in vain. The Sibyl grew warm, and said bitter things. The creditor retorted. Taunts followed. A scene, in which all the parties would have been implicated with the police, was threatening, when Mademoiselle Lenormand, controlling herself, took Jerome's left hand, and, studying its lines, said to Pierre Arthur: "If you possess five francs of your own, not borrowed, "but honestly-owned money, go and stake it on 27, 37, and 38, in the Royal Lottery. The *tirage* is to-day. To-morrow you will be the possessor of 24,000 francs." Pierre had not a *sou*. The bailiffs seized and dragged him away. Jerome, however, replied: "Thank you, Mademoiselle; I learn for the first time my fortunate numbers, and will profit by them." The sorceress had but one recourse. To her, prizes in the lottery were denied. If the numbers designated became hers, they would not be drawn. She instantly sent her servant to secure the three numbers; and the result was, the disappointment of Jerome—but not the release of Pierre Arthur.

Eight days before the death of Louis XVIII., Lenormand gave the following five numbers as destined to come out at the next drawing: First, the number of the King's age, 68; the number of years he had reigned, 30; the year of the entry of the allies into Paris, 14; the day the King had ascended the throne, 26; and the number affixed to his name in the list of the sovereigns of France, 18. All the numbers were made public. The prediction had been a topic of sport at the *salons*. The numbers were known, paraded in handbills, published in newspapers, long before secured, and so much talked about as to be in every body's mouth. Residents in Paris, in September, 1824, well remember the surprise, as directors of the lottery remember the reckoning, when it was announced that the five numbers, named by Mademoiselle Lenormand—68, 30, 14, 26, and 18—had drawn the principal prizes.

The Countess de Normandy says: "In 1809, Mademoiselle Lenormand, entirely ignorant of me, during an interview of an hour, predicted what has followed within twenty years: my preservation of the lives of three state prisoners; my acquaintance with Lord Byron; my journey to Italy, at the request of Pope Leo XII.; my Maltese cross, and my visit to Paris. I learned one lesson from that horoscope, and that was, never again to pry into the secrets of futurity."

The writer saw Mademoiselle Lenormand nineteen years ago. She was then past seventy-nine, and appeared still older. Her immense frame, well covered with adipose flesh, was a good deal bowed down, and her gait unsteady. She leaned heavily upon a cane. Her hair was of snowy whiteness, and fell in masses of curls upon the rich *moire antique* silk and Valenciennes lace she wore. She spoke in tones remarkably soft and clear, without any of the piping or quavering of old age, and her eyes—black and piercing—seemed to retain all the brilliancy of their youth. She resided in a handsome and well-furnished dwelling; kept carriage, horses, and liveried servants; and still practised her occult profession. Her reputation then was certainly not what it had been during the days of the Empire; but many persons consulted her, and those mostly of the upper classes. Besides her ordinary questions, she asked, at this time; "Do you prefer to go up or down?" "Does a height make you dizzy?" "Have you, in moments of coolness, ever desired to die?" Her guesses—if guesses they were—of past personal history were certainly remarkable, and her predictions of the future have been wonderfully verified. It is not germane to the question of her gifts as to how she knew the life of a stranger—an American—in the past. There is a possibility, never so remote, of collusion. But how did she foresee that the time-hurried traveller, who was asking her questions, would remain a decade of years in Europe; that a great civil war would call him back to his own country; that the nearest in blood to him would pass through loss and suffering to honor; and that out of the dregs of his people the questioner would live to see one rise who would become the leader of his nation? The writer can only say that years have fulfilled all that Mademoiselle Lenormand predicted to him nearly twenty years ago.

We have said that our Sibyl was alive last November. She was then ninety-eight years old. Our informant represents her as decrepit, bowed almost double, deaf, toothless, nearly blind, tremulous, palsied on one side, and wholly incapable of locomotion. "But," he adds, "she is the sorceress still. Carriages wait at her door. Ladies of rank frequent her *boudoir*. The remarkable predictions she makes are more remarkably verified. I dare not write what she told Madame Vernon was to be the future of the Emperor. If it should prove true—which now seems impossible—the parallel between the nephew and his uncle would be complete."

What has been here narrated is authentic. It is a problem for the psychologists. They fathom animal magnetism. Let them try their plummet in the mysteries of the palm and the stars. No mist is impenetrable to modern thinkers—no millstone opaque.

Of Mademoiselle Lenormand let me say, in conclusion, this is true: She seeks truth in the stars, as geologists seek it in the rocks, or mathematicians in figures. She contrived to be believed in during an age of her earlier years, when there was no faith in God or His angels, in the devil or his imps. Only the other day, when a laborer was killed by a fall from the Corso in Rome, his fellow-workman, leaving the corpse and running to consult his "Book of Dreams," invested instantly fifteen *bajocchi* in the lottery, on the corresponding numbers to *paura, sangue, cascata*—fear, blood, fall—and won a prize of three hundred. The world will not be robbed of its heathenism. There was no monopoly to the old Roman *haruspices*. And as to the art of Mademoiselle Lenormand, whether it be mere chance, or undiscovered properties of numbers, or real understanding with the invisible world—which we leave the reader to consider—it is evident that the time-honored trade in human credulity is not among the things that are past.—*Overland Monthly.*

HUNGARIAN ELOQUENCE.—During a recent tour through Hungary, Eotvos, the Minister, was harangued by various "Stuhlrichter," and to judge from a few specimens, Hungarian eloquence is a fearful thing. Thus George Paulevics addressed his Excellency in these terms:—"We see the star arise which lifts our nation up to the level of the times. Were I endowed with Samson's power, I would tear the biggest oak from the mountains and dip it even as a pen into the flaming orb of the sun in order to put down with indelible features your Excellency's name for the benefit of those who hate the light."

THE SISTERS.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Annie and Rhoda, sisters twain,
Woke in the night to the sound of rain,

The rush of wind, the ramp and roar
Of great waves climbing a rocky shore.

Annie rose up in her bed-gown white,
And looked out into the storm and night.

"Hush, and hearken!" she cried in fear,
"Hearest thou nothing, sister dear?"

"I hear the sea, and the plash of rain,
And roar of the north-east hurricane.

"Get thee back to the bed so warm,
No good comes of watching a storm.

"What is it to thee, I fain would know,
That waves are roaring and wild winds blow?

"No lover of thine 's afloat to miss
The harbor-lights on a night like this."

"But I heard a voice cry out my name,
Up from the sea on the wind it came!

"Twice and thrice have I heard it call,
And the voice is the voice of Eatwick Hall!"

On her pillow the sister tossed her head.
"Hall of the Heron is safe," she said.

"In the tautest schooner that ever swam
He rides at anchor in Anisquam.

"And, if in peril from swamping sea
Or lee shore rocks, would he call on thee?"

But the girl heard only the wind and tide,
And wringing her small, white hands, she cried—

"Oh, sister Rhoda, there's something wrong;
I hear it again, so loud and long.

"'Annie! Annie!' I hear it call,
And the voice is the voice of Eatwick Hall!"

Up sprang the elder, with eyes aflame,
"Thou liest! He never would call thy name!

"If he did, I would pray the wind and sea
To keep him forever from thee and me!"

Then out of the sea blew a dreadful blast;
Like the cry of a dying man it passed.

The young girl hushed on her lips a groan,
But through her tears a strange light shone—

The solemn joy of her heart's release
To own and cherish its love in peace.

"Dearest!" she whispered, under breath,
"Life was a lie, but true is death.

"The love I hid from myself away
Shall crown me now in the light of day.

"My ears shall never to wooer list,
Never by lover, my lips be kissed.

"Sacred to thee am I henceforth,
Thou in Heaven and I on earth!"

She came and stood by her sister's bed:
"Hall of the Heron is dead!" she said.

"The wind and the waves their work have done,
We shall see him no more beneath the sun.

"Little will reck that heart of thine,
It loved him not with a love like mine,

"I, for his sake, were he but here,
Could hem and broider thy bridal gear,

"Though hands should tremble and eyes be wet,
And stitch for stitch in my heart be set.

"But now my soul with his soul I wed;
Thine the living, and mine the dead!"

—*Atlantic Monthly.*

Out in the Streets.

A STORY FOR CHRISTMAS.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD.

Author of "EAST LYNNE," "BESSY RANE," &c., &c.

I

A commodious house, standing within its large walled garden, near to Kensington: and the time the first half of the year 1866.

The bay-window stood open to the lawn: you could step out from it at will. Seated at the breakfast table, its fair white cloth spread with pretty china and silver, was Robert Seaton: a slender man of middle height, and very pleasant, but rather sensitive face: his age some seven-and-twenty years.

His wife was opposite to him. She wore a blue muslin gown, and they were laughing over it. It had shrunk in the washing: the sleeves were short; the waist would not come together by any dint of pulling. Mrs. Seaton had secured it with pins, but there shone a great gap.

"I must say it looks admirably tidy," observed Mr. Seaton. "Quite a pattern to be studied."

"Be quiet, Robert. Had I stayed to put on another, you would have had to wait for breakfast. Who was to suppose it would shrink like this! And so pretty as it was! Becoming, too."

"Don't be vain, Anne."

She laughed a little. He went on with his breakfast, glancing over and anon at the May flowers, springing up in the garden beds. The sun shone down, the grass was green, the young leaves wore their delicate and most beautiful tint; the blossoms were of a gay sweetness.

"I forgot to tell you, Anne," he suddenly exclaimed, looking up at his wife. "Charles has got his company."

"Has he! How do you know?"

"I read it yesterday in the Indian news."

"Oh," returned Mrs. Seaton—and there was a shade of disappointment in her tone. "I thought—perhaps—"

"Perhaps what?"

"That they might have written to tell you from Seaton Farm."

"No fear of that, Anne. They don't write to me. Never mind, my dear. We can do without it."

Mrs. Seaton gently pushed back her pretty brown hair—a habit of hers when thoughtful or vexed. The hair was of nearly the same shade as her husband's: but his eyes were brown, hers gray. She had delicate features and a clear, healthy, sensible face: otherwise there was not much beauty in it to boast of.

The handle of the door was turned and twisted by inexperienced hands, and a little girl of four, with bright eager eyes and fair flowing curls, came bounding into the room.

"Dood morning, pa-pa; dood morning, mam-ma! Kiss Annie!"

She had no need to say kiss Annie. They were ready always, the father especially, to devour with kisses this their first-born child. Robert Seaton took her on his knee, and fondly stroked her hair.

"Where's Paul?" he asked presently.

"Paul been naughty," said the child, whose tongue was backward for her age. "Nurse not let him come. He trew his bread-butter in de fender."

A servant came in to say the brougham was at the door. Robert Seaton, remarkably punctual in regard to his business hours, was ready for it.

"Good-by, my dear."

Stooping to kiss his wife, he touched the gap in the blue gown quite satirically, and laughed. She said it would be made right before the morrow: but he whispered that he thought he must bring her a new one from town. Paul, a young gentleman of three with great gray eyes, was descending the stairs, his nurse behind him. Robert Seaton caught him up, tossed him, kissed him, put him down again, and went out to his carriage.

Mrs. Seaton, busy with her little ones, her servants, her household matters generally, and with some friends who came to see her, passed through the day much as usual. One of them, Miss Barle, stayed to dinner. Robert Seaton was late for it—a very unusual thing—and they sat down alone. Close upon that, the brougham was heard driving in with him. He passed up-stairs to his dressing-room: and certainly did not seem to hurry himself when there.

"What kept you, Robert?" asked his wife, when he appeared.

"Business, he shortly answered.

Miss Barle: a tall, angular, sunny-hearted maiden of eight-and-thirty, who protested she'd not get married, though the best man in Christendom came to beg her on his knees; talked and laughed as was her wont. People were apt to say that when Elizabeth Barle was present, nobody else could get in a word edgeways. Nevertheless, before the dinner was over, Mrs. Seaton remarked that her husband was unusually silent, and sent away his plate each time nearly untouched.

"Is anything the matter, Robert?"

"The matter? Oh, my head aches a little."

He sat back on the sofa in the drawing-room, still as death. Miss Barle asked him to sing. He came forward at once, and sank a song, and then another that they opened for him, Mrs. Seaton playing. But he seemed to do it all mechanically, his wife thought; as though his mind was pre-occupied; and she could not make it out. Robert Seaton's voice was a very attractive one—full of sweet melody. They could have listened to it for hours. But he sat down again, saying he had had a tiring day in the city, and relapsed into silence.

At bed-time, after Miss Barle had left, and Mrs. Seaton had gone on up-stairs, he rose from his seat, like a man released from some restraining fetters, to pace the room with uneven steps. His face was full of care, his mind of doubt and agony. A frightful trouble had fallen on Robert Seaton, and he knew not how to tell his wife. He decided not to tell her: perhaps it might not turn out so badly as it threatened.

In the morning, after tossing and turning all night like a man in a fever, he went off to the city early. His wife could not imagine what was the matter. In regard to affairs, they were so largely prosperous that her thoughts never turned to them: but, rather, to family matters.

"I hope there's no ill news from Seaton Farm—or from his brother in India!"

Ah, no; it was neither one nor the other. The mid-day sun had not reached its full height when Miss Barle came in, her face white and shrunken.

"My dear, tell me the truth outright," she said, catching hold of Mrs. Seaton as the servant closed the door. "I can bear the worst of certainty better than suspense."

"The truth about what?" exclaimed the poor young wife, stricken with some unknown fear.

Miss Barle questioned her face closely. "Do you know of *nothing* amiss?" she asked. "Have you heard nothing?"

"Nothing whatever. You must tell me what you mean."

"They say that Overend and Gurneys have gone. All to smash."

Just at the first moment, Mrs. Seaton did not perceive what the "going" of Overend and Gurneys had to do with her or Miss Barle. "Dear me!" she said. "Well!"

"Child, don't you understand? It will be next door to a national ruin. Some banks closed yesterday; others close to-day. That's not all. The—need I speak? I shall shock you."

Ah, Mrs. Seaton comprehended now. Her lips grew white: her imploring fingers entwined themselves round the arm of Miss Barle. That lady finished in a whisper,

"The 'Great Loan and Discount' must fall with them."

For two or three minutes there ensued a silence: the two women sitting together side by side, neither daring to speak.

"I am not sure that I should have come in, but that I thought assuredly your husband must have told you," resumed Miss Barle, with hesitation. "I came to ask you for news—hoping to gather a grain or two of comfort. I thought you might know that—perhaps—he might have made himself a little safe: also me. Poor me!"

But Mrs. Seaton had not one single grain of comfort to give. Her senses seemed to be in a chaos, her mind was in a state of bewilderment. All she could long for now was to see her husband, that she might learn the best and the worst.

Before the day was over, other friends had called, dismay on their countenances, wild stories of ruin on their tongues; and bearing the most improbable rumors of the unexampled panic in the city. At least, they sounded improbable to Mrs. Seaton's terrified ears.

They came and went, these callers, and the day wore on with its accustomed routine. Household arrangements were uninterrupted; meal-times came round, and the table was spread. In the midst of our greatest woes, the house must on. What a mockery it all seemed to the heart of the stricken wife, waiting and watching in her suspense.

Six o'clock, and the dinner waiting: but no master came home to eat it. The brougham returned without them. Seven o'clock: eight; nine; ten; eleven. Anne Seaton had crept to the hall door, to watch and listen. All kinds of dreadful improbabilities kept surging through her brain. Had he *died* of the shock; the ruin? Had the blow been so fierce as to overturn his reason, and he had been unable to bear up against it? Never, to the latest day of her life, will she forget that night's watching, as she sat on the door-step.

The clock was striking twelve when her husband came up the gravel path; fagged, pale, worn. There had been a meeting of the board, and that had detained him. In the momentous calamity that was looming, the members had sat far into the night, discussing—not how to avert it, for that would be impossible, but what extent of ruin it would bring on their own individual selves. Mr. Seaton could not move till they did.

There was no concealment from his wife now: with his aching head leaning on his hand, underneath the lights, he told her all.

"Robert," she said, catching up her breath, "can *nothing* be done to avert it?"

He shook his head. "The house is already closed."

"What will be the ending?"

In his heart's bitterness Robert Seaton could have laughed ironically at the question. The ending? Neither he nor any other man could foresee that.

"Miss Barle was hoping that perhaps you had been able to take care of her, Robert."

"Ay, I daresay. Others will be thinking the same: my father amidst them. His case—for me—will be the worst of all."

"It will be utter ruin, Elizabeth Barle says. It will mean going out of house, and home, and everything. Every shilling she had, you know, was put into the Great Loan and Discount Company."

"Every shilling that I have is in it too."

Mrs. Seaton knew it well.

"It is an awful time," he resumed; "a nearly universal wreck. Associations, supposed to be stable, banks, private firms—all are falling together. The panic in the city to-day has been something frightful."

"But, Robert, what has led to it?"

What had led to it? Robert Seaton was not prepared to answer the question. As yet he scarcely understood himself. It had been a go-ahead age for some years past. The world, throwing off its old jog-trot pace, had been rushing along on wheels. People had not been content to plod on slowly and perseveringly to riches, as the old custom was, but had leaped into them with a spring. Gigantic companies had been organized, banks had been started, mysterious offices had sprung up; the public flourished. The safe old four or five per cent. interest had been despised; cast to the winds: capitalists, whether small or large; retired officers; old ladies and young, possessing a few thousands, must get their six, seven, eight—goodness knows how much more per cent. for their money. Young men beginning life, had set up their households on a grand scale, and driven to town in their broughams: their fathers, ten times more really wealthy than they were, taking the omnibus still. With so much money coming in universally for a short while, it could not be but that foundations should totter. And a general collapse had supervened.

The truths suggested themselves dimly to Robert Seaton. A sage gentleman had propounded them in his hearing that day, at the board-table of the Great Loan and Discount Company. Robert Seaton supposed it might have been so: he had not quite formed his opinion. He had been one of the many to reap large benefits and go ahead: and he could not make more or less of it than that if he tried forever.

They sat up talking the best part of the night, he and his wife. Perhaps there were many more households in London that miserable night, ruined as they were, who did the same.

The days went on; the unhappy days. Intense gloom, like a pall, hung over the financial world of the metropolis. Things got worse instead of better: what was dark at first, settled down into the blackest of irredeemable black.

But we have only to do with the Great Loan and Discount Company. Its collapse was utter. Hard things were said of it. If its sufferers did not call it a swindle, they went very near it. Robert Seaton, as acting manager, came in for the brunt of the blame. The clerks could take themselves off; the directors sheltered themselves at home under the plea of sore throats and headaches; but Mr. Seaton must be at his post, pending the winding up.

There was nothing to wind up. Save debts. Debts and enormous liabilities to creditors. The Great Loan and Discount had a great deal of money owing to it, for which they held paper; promissory notes, discounted bills, and so on; but as the parties, liable for all these, were involved in the general public ruin, Mr. Seaton might as well have pitched the documents into the fire, for all the good they were. Abuse fell upon his head thick and three-fold. It was certain that he—he himself—had induced several friends to put their spare money into the concern: in some cases their *all*. Miss Barle was one. It was of no use for Robert Seaton to reiterate to these people that he had acted alone from a wish to serve them—that he had implicitly believed that the Great Loan and Discount Company had stood on sound and firm legs—and that it was the breaking up of other and larger concerns that had involved it in sudden and unforeseen ruin. The most civil retort made to him was—that he ought to have foreseen it.

How Robert Seaton bore through the weeks that ensued, he scarcely knew: the time would lie on his mind for years as something to be shuddered at. For he was a sensitive-natured man, of high principles, and would not willingly have wronged or misled his neighbor. But he got the credit of having done it. Ruined men; ay and women, too, told him to his face that he was dishonorable, dishonest, next door to a thief. They overlooked the fact that he was more completely ruined than they were. It was very hard to bear.

He had to go out of his home a penniless man, with the stigma of insolvency attaching to him. He was personally liable for certain claims connected with the once flourishing company, and his furniture and effects were ruthlessly seized to satisfy, so far as they would, the demands. Poor man! Poor wife! Poor little children!

Some lines of retrospect are necessary. Seaton Farm, in the county of Kent, was not a farm in the usual acceptation of the word, but a gentleman's estate. Notwithstanding, its land was tolerably extensive, and required active supervision. The house was a moderate-sized residence, the homestead of the Seaton family. Paul Seaton (the father of Robert) lived there. He had about fifteen hundred a year, all told. His eldest son, Charles, was in the army; his four daughters lived at home with him; Robert was younger. Economical, highly respectable people, these Seatons, and quiet: fast people called them slow. Mr. Seaton was an exact and rather hard man. His land was managed by one James Rouse, who was called the steward, and lived in a pretty dwelling. The estate, not entailed, was intended for Charles; Robert, who would have to get his living in right earnest, hesitated between farming—which he understood—and the Bar; but eventually chose the latter. Before the choice was decided, he would sometimes ask his father in a half-joking, half-serious manner, to promise to put him into the steward's place and house whenever old Rouse should drop off. Of course Mr. Seaton turned a deaf ear.

Once in two or three years, or so, Mr. Seaton would treat his daughters to a short season in London. It was while Robert was "eating his dinners," thereby qualifying himself to wear a wig and gown, that they came up on one of those visits. The sisters made him quit his lodgings and take up his abode with them for the time being: he had been loved and indulged by them always. During this sojourn—they had a furnished house near Eaton Square—Robert fell into trouble. That is, into love: which in his case came to the same thing. The young lady, Anne Elliot, was a governess in a neighboring household: and she had nothing whatever to recommend her save her good face, and her good principles. A most desirable girl *with* money: old Mr. Seaton might have acknowledged that: without it, one not to be noticed or looked at.

There ensued some tribulation. When it came out that Robert Seaton had made the acquaintance of this neighboring girl, and asked her to marry him, Mr. Seaton and his daughters were dumb with horror. A governess!—for Robert Seaton! And one without a penny-piece!

It ended in an estrangement. A parting. And Mr. Seaton assured his son that it would be for life. Robert would not give up Anne Elliot. The family in which she taught, by way of showing *their* opinion of the fitness of things, turned the young lady away. Robert civilly demanded his portion from his father—three thousand pounds—and married her. The money was Robert's own. Mr. Seaton did not attempt to keep it from him: he shook his hands of Robert and the money together, and took unto himself merit for so doing.

"I do not wish you to come altogether to the dogs, Robert Seaton," he said, his cold eyes averted, his cold voice wearing its hardest tone, "therefore I hand you over your fortune. Put out to proper interest, it will bring you in one hundred and fifty pounds per annum. You can contrive to live upon that, if you choose, while you make way in your profession. Only—do not attempt to keep up any intercourse with me or my family; and remember that you will never have any assistance from me or mine. Henceforth we are strangers."

Anne Elliot—Anne Seaton then—thought the hundred and fifty would be ample for them, if they were economical—and she would take care of that. But Robert Seaton made a different use of the money. The Great Loan and Discount Company, then being set up, came in his way. He was told it would be a grand thing; he thought it would be, and he threw his services and his three thousand pounds into it. So he abandoned his study for the Bar, and never was called.

So wonderful a success did the Great Loan and Discount turn out, the returns for embarked money were so enormous, that Robert Seaton broke through the interdict of holding no communication with his father and wrote to him. In his good-feeling, for he was ever kind-hearted, he thought he saw a way of atoning for the heartburning he had caused. "Dear father," he said, "the object of my writing to you must plead my excuse." Placing before his father a simple statement of facts, of what the company was really doing, he suggested that he should place a few thousand pounds in it. Mr. Seaton—never a man more alive to his pecuniary interests than he—condescended to reply, demanding further details. Finally he came to London, and had an interview with Robert at the office; and the result was that he embarked in it all the money he could scrape together—somewhere about eight thousand pounds. But he took care to let Robert know that his offence was not in the least condoned—that they were strangers as heretofore.

For two or three short years, Mr. Seaton received the benefit of his investment in the shape of a very large interest. And now the crash came; and his money was gone. It will readily be understood how intensely Robert Seaton felt this; his own ruin seemed to him as nothing, compared with the loss he had brought upon his father.

As to Mr. Seaton, words would not be able to describe his consternation and wrath. The letter of reproach that Robert received from him, he will never forget while life shall last. Mr. Seaton accused him, as others had done, of having deluded him from interested motives: of having only got the money from him to serve himself. That, to Robert, was more bitter than all.

But it was in truth a serious affair for Mr. Seaton. Gaining more, he had been spending more; and had allowed his eldest son, who was in India, to draw upon him rather largely. He quitted Seaton Farm, letting the house, but not the land: that remained under the charge of Rouse, the faithful steward. The family retired to the Continent; where they might live at as small a cost as they pleased, and indulge their bitter animosity against the scapegrace, Robert. Thus from two to three years went on.

II.

The fire was getting low in the shabby little sitting-room. A lady, her gown faded and worn, sat sewing fast by the light of a solitary candle, a weary look on her attenuated face. The house was on the outskirts of London, towards the south; its neighborhood, bearing the reputation of being "genteel," as well as cheap.

The clock in the passage below—for this room was on the first floor—struck the hour. Nine. At the same moment, the front door opened, and footsteps entered the passage. She glanced up to listen, an expectant look on her pale face. But no: the steps did not ascend.

"It is not Robert," she murmured; and caught up her needle again. "What can make him so late?"

You would never have taken her for that bright woman whom you once saw seated at her breakfast-table in the blue muslin dress—Mrs. Seaton—so worn and subdued was she now. But long-continued adversity changes most people.

A quarter of an hour's hard sewing—at least as hard as her feeble fingers could accomplish, for she had latterly been very ill—and the work was finished. It was a little warm pelisse or coat, made out of the best parts of a gown that had done its full duty for herself. She held it up to the light to take a general view; and was satisfied.

"It will do nicely for him, poor little fellow."

Putting some coal on the fire—but not much; for coal was no more plentiful with them than were other luxuries—she moved quietly about, setting things straight, when a baby's cry was heard from the next room. She strove to hush the child to sleep again by gently rocking his cradle. But, baby-like, he would not be hushed; and Mrs. Seaton had to take him up and quiet him in another way. After laying him down again, she passed into a small apartment, no larger than a closet, on the same landing, and looked at the two children sleeping there: a little girl between six and seven, a boy younger. Scarcely was she back again by the fire when Robert Seaton came in.

Ah, how he had altered! *She* was changed; but not as he was. The step was listless, the face haggard. The once bright hair had thinned at the temples.

"Robert, I thought you must have been lost," she exclaimed, as he flung himself into a chair.

"I have been to Holloway," he answered. "There was an advertisement in the paper this morning, for some one to assist a tradesman there for a few weeks to send out Christmas accounts and post his books: application to be made after six o'clock in the evening."

"Did you get it?" she inquired, her tone unconsciously taking a sound of hope.

"No. Some one had been there before me. I am dead tired, Anne."

"But—you did not walk all the way back?"

"Every step of it. And there also."

She laid a tray-cloth across half the table, put two cups upon it, the loaf, and some butter. Pray don't think they were fashionable people, going to tea at this fashionable hour. It was tea and supper in one: ay and sometimes for Robert Seaton, dinner too, this meal.

"I am very sorry, Robert," she sighed, "I could not get any meat to-day. The butcher would not trust me."

"What did you have for dinner?" he gently asked.

"Oh, we managed," was the rather evasive reply. "The children had some nice boiled rice and treacle. See, Robert; I have finished Paul's pelisse. Won't it be warm for him?"

Robert Seaton nodded as she held it out, but answer made he none. He was really broken in spirit and in heart, this man. Perhaps he could not bear misfortune bravely. Some can; and never show it.

"I think I am almost too tired to eat, Anne."

"Robert, you must. You must eat. Why, you would break down utterly, if you did not."

She poured out the tea. He cut some bread and butter for her, and a thick crust for himself. They began talking of the badness of times. So very many men of the better classes were out of employment, engineers especially. It had been the case ever since that deplorable panic, two years and a half ago.

"As I came through the shop at Holloway to-night, after speaking to the proprietor in his box of a counting-house, there were ten or a dozen men waiting in it, on the same errand that I had gone," he observed, as he slowly spread a modicum of butter on his crust. "Some of them, I am sure, were gentlemen. If a post of any kind offers, fifty are ready to snap it up, no matter how inferior it may be. We are too thick on the ground, that's the fact."

Their present position seemed very hopeless. Mrs. Seaton turned her face to front the fire. Her eyes had filled with tears, and she would have hidden them from him. He saw, for all that.

"Don't Anne. Crying will not mend it."

"If I could see an ending to it," she answered, letting the tears trickle down. "If I could only see what the end will be, and when it will come. We *cannot* go on like this forever. And I—I am not able to help. My strength seems as if it would not return to me."

He knew why; knew it all too well: that the nourishment she took was not of the right kind, or sufficient for her. And there was that great healthy, hungry baby! Robert Seaton ventured on an unusual word of cheering.

"Something will turn up, Anne. Don't you despair."

"No. I shall not do that until I lose my faith in God."

She put away the traces of the supper, her husband leaning forward gloomily over the scrap of fire, noticing nothing. When he looked round, she was sitting quietly, mending the children's socks.

"Would you please snuff the candle, Robert?"

It was one of the old-fashioned moulds, cheaper than the newer composites; and, as Mrs. Seaton thought, giving a better light. As he obeyed, he asked her whether she need work again to-night: she seemed to be always at work.

Yes, always. Where the wardrobe of children cannot be suitably replenished, only those who have experienced it can know what time and labor it costs to keep the old things in barely decent order. With a faint laugh, Mrs. Seaton held to his view the sock on her fingers: a heap of darns, a heap of holes.

"There is so much to do for them, Robert, I have to make use of every spare moment."

He turned his face to the fire again. Heaven knew how bitterly all this told on Robert Seaton. And he was powerless to alter it. To himself he would often present the image of a man with, metaphorically speaking, his wings clipped.

"In three days it will be Christmas Day, Robert," she said in a half-timid tone, breaking the silence. She did not like to add "And what shall we do?"—she did not say "Is there any chance of Christmas cheer for us?" But he understood her.

"You will have some money to-morrow evening, Anne. I happened to meet John Hadcock to-day in the Strand; and he promised to lend me a sovereign or two if I'd call in at his office to-morrow. It will tide us over Christmas."

"Oh how glad I am!" she said brightly.

Once more the baby awoke and cried. Mrs. Seaton put up her work for the night, and went to bed to hush it. Her husband sat on still, though the fire was out.

He was doing what he was too much given to do—recalling the miserable road of his downfall; the panorama of ill-luck, scene by scene, since his trouble set in. How they had contrived to go on during these two years and a half, he could hardly tell. Many a one, looking back on the same similar ill-fate, can no more tell than Robert Seaton

could. God must have kept them; must have provided food and necessaries day by day—that is the best they can say. And well for all if they say it from the heart.

After they had been driven from their happy home—penniless, save for a few personal trifles, that were afterwards turned into small sums of money at need—Robert Seaton was seized with a very serious illness. It left him too shattered for a long while to do anything. A case like this brings out the wife's energies—if she possesses any. Mrs. Seaton got together a few pupils and taught them music; and so earned a little money. She ventured to write to Mr. Seaton, (enclosing the letter to his London bankers, for she did not know his address) telling him of the sick state of his son. After some time the letter was returned to her by Mr. Seaton—they knew his hand-writing on the envelope, which bore a foreign post-mark—returned without a word.

They had existed in some way; contriving to keep up an appearance of respectability. Robert Seaton had been unable to get into anything, good or bad, high or low, though he sought to do it with all his best energies. Too many, like himself, were out of employment; men were jostling each other. It is true; as the world knows. Now and again, some friend, who had known him in better days, would assist him with a little money—a loan, to be paid back if good times ever came again. But this assistance was but rare: Robert Seaton was one of those sensitive men who cannot ask without feeling the deepest pain and humiliation. A repulse to him seemed worse than death: and he had to experience it again and again. Few are willing to lend, especially to one who is fallen. And so the time had gone on somehow: he getting a little, Mrs. Seaton a little by her music pupils. They had had to change their home every few months, each time falling lower in the social ladder. In the present house they had this small first floor and the use of the back kitchen.

It had been soon after they entered on it, that an additional misfortune fell upon them—the birth of the baby. It stopped Mrs. Seaton's teaching—for she was very ill, and continued so. She could not get out to her pupils (poor pupils at the best, and scantily paid for;) they did not come to her, for she had no piano. The very fact of their being in so prospectless a condition made her fret; and that was not the best way to gain strength. The child was two months old now, and she only seemed to get weaker.

"It has come to that pass that I don't mind what I do," muttered Robert Seaton, reviewing all these miseries over his fireless grate. "I'd break stones in the road if I could only get a living at it." Others have said it before him.

John Hadcock's promised help of a sovereign or two did not come. When Robert Seaton called, as by appointment, he was told that Mr. Hadcock had left town for a few days. Was it true?—or only an excuse? He had got to doubt these answers. On Christmas Eve he mustered up his courage to apply to some one else—who had assisted him before and never turned a deaf ear. But this gentleman really was out of town: had gone, his clerk said, until the following Tuesday. And so that application was also fruitless.

Sick at heart, fainting in spirit, weary of foot, Robert Seaton set out to retrace his steps homewards. What was he to do?—he might not steal; he did not like to beg; it appeared that he could not borrow. The busy streets were full that afternoon: eager crowds jostled him. Gay shops displayed their tempting Christmas wares; men and women pressed round the windows to gaze, and flocked in and out with their purchases. All seemed to have plenty of money; all save he. He had about two shillings in his pocket, counting up halfpence and farthings: and he knew not whence in the wide world to get the wherewithal to buy a bit of dinner for them on the morrow, with the other necessaries to tide over Christmas Day and Sunday. He began ransacking his brains, as to whether there was *anything* left to them worth pledging—that he might provide it in that way. And he believed there was not. A ragged man and child were singing in the road: even they seemed to have money given them. He saw a sixpence tossed—the donor was a fat woman in a red shawl, with a basket on her arm—he saw pence: people open their hearts to the poor at Christmas. Only he seemed destitute—he, the apparent gentleman, walking along at his ease.

"Oh, papa, papa! mamma's ill. She's lying on the bed with her eyes shut."

The words greeted him as he entered the house. His pretty little girl, her fair hair flying behind her, came sobbing down the stairs to speak them. Paul stood on the top with a stolid face: the boy hardly knew what was the meaning of the bustle; what not.

"What do you say is the matter with mamma, Annie?" he asked, hastening up.

"She fell down on the floor: she can't speak," answered the child. "Mr. Tarn is there."

Weakness, or some accession of illness had made Mrs. Seaton faint. The frightened children called up the people below; and they, finding she did not come to, ran for the doctor.

She began to revive as Robert entered. Mr. Tarn was the medical man who had been recently attending her,—and he was not paid yet. Before quitting, when she had come round, and was sitting up, he spoke a few words aside in the husband's ear.

"Mr. Seaton, your wife *must* have better nourishment. Don't be angry if I speak of this—I have gleaned somewhat of the state of affairs from little Annie. Wine is absolutely essential for her, so is meat. Try and let her have them, there's a good fellow. Otherwise I will not be answerable for the result."

Let her have them! Why, he would have given them to her with his heart's best blood! But how? How procure them?

He bent his head in bitter perplexity, sitting forwards. The fire was blazing just then, and lighted up his worn, haggard, but still most refined face. The shades of evening had drawn on, and the room had no light save the fire. Annie sat on the carpet holding the baby across her lap; Paul played with a tailless horse out of Noah's ark. Mrs. Seaton was asleep on the bed in the other room, after taking a cordial procured for her.

"I am to have my new pelisse on to-morrow if papa takes me for a walk," spoke Paul suddenly. "Mamma said so."

Could Paul have discerned the frightful idea that the word suggested to his father, he might have been struck into his shoes with indignation. *That newly-made pelisse: would it not pledge for a shilling or two!*

"I want my tea," said Paul, again.

"When mamma gets up," reproved wise little Annie. "Don't be impatient, sir."

"Hush, children!" exclaimed Robert Seaton, in a whisper. "You will wake mamma. We must be quiet and let her sleep, you know, that she may get well."

And they sat on again. The blaze went down; the room darkened. Pondering upon this and that, a thought dawned upon Robert Seaton's mind, and did not go away again. At first he mentally derided it for its utter absurdity; its wild impracticability. But, as we all know, dwelling on a thing softens its asperities down; and Robert Seaton ended by asking himself—Should he do this?

Should he go into the streets that Christmas Eve night and sing for money?—as he had seen the ragged man do in the afternoon. It might return a better harvest than Paul's pelisse: if he could only bring his pride to it."

The inner door was gently pushed open, and Mrs. Seaton entered, her face pale, her steps tottering. Robert hastened to her.

"My dear, you should not have got off the bed."

"I am well now," she said with a smile. "How quiet you have all been."

He placed her in a chair. The children kissed her. Baby woke up then—as a matter of course—and had to be taken by its mamma. After tea the children went to bed; the baby was laid in his crib. By that time, busy with one thing and another, Robert Seaton had arrived at the conclusion that his notion was only fit for a man insane.

Stumping up the stairs came the greengrocer. He wanted the money owing for the coals sent in that morning. Robert could only give promises; and the man said an uncivil word or two—about gentlefolks living at ease on honest folks' work. The matter upset him. When the man had gone he leaned his elbow on the mantel-piece, dreadfully depressed. All the worst of his position, and in an exaggerated form, stared him full in the face: he felt as if he must give up to desperation. What Mrs. Seaton saw in his countenance struck a nameless terror to her.

"Robert," she softly said, with a catching-up of the breath, "don't, don't despair. God will surely remember us if we only bear up and trust in Him."

"I don't think He seems to do much for us," was the callous answer—but in truth he was nearly beside himself, and all heart and spirit had gone out of him. "We have been waiting for help of some kind or other rather long."

"Robert! Robert! Oh, don't—don't lose your best faith!" was her imploring cry. "It would kill me. As long as you bear up, *I* can."

He caught her hand in his, and stood with his arm round her. Stood for some minutes, saying nothing; only looking into the fire, and thinking. "May God give me strength to do this thing!" was his mental conclusion.

"But where are you going, Robert?"—for he was moving to the door.

"Only on an errand, my dear. I'll not be longer than I can help."

"But where—where?" she cried, stepping up to him—and he detected a strange anxiety in her eyes and tone.

"To see about some dinner for to-morrow. Indeed, I'll be back as soon as I can."

Kissing her as fondly as ever he had done in their happier days, he passed down the stairs, flinging over his shoulders a dark cloth cape of his. It looked better than it was, for the moths had filled it with small holes—as might be seen when held up to the light. He had tried to pledge it once and the pawnbroker would not take it in. With this cape drawn well up, and his broad-brimmed hat drawn well down, he was not readily recognizable.

Robert Seaton was going out in the streets to sing. He had brought his courage to the point. Under the shades of night, and wrapped up from observation, he felt that he would do it. It might bring him in a little harvest of silver. Whatever else he had lost, he had not lost his sweet voice for singing.

Onwards he pressed. Up one street, down another; nearer and nearer to the great town. Turning into a quiet road, where a row of handsome houses faced some trees on the opposite side, he thought here might be a good place to begin. The houses were most of them ablaze with light: happy families within had assembled to usher-in Christmas. In the drawing-room of the first, the blinds were up, and he could see a couch placed close to the window, and a gentleman lying on it. Yes, this was undoubtedly as favorable a spot as any.

Robert Seaton's heart was beating and thumping as though he were about to commit a crime. He *could* not raise his voice to begin. It is a fact. For full ten minutes he hovered about there in hesitating timidity. And then he mentally called himself hard names, and strove to imagine himself a real street-singer, and to take comfort in the thought that those who heard would never dream of his being anything else.

All the way, coming along, he had been deliberating what he should commence with. Not with one of the frivolous modern songs—as too many of them are: he could not have brought his aching heart to it. So he broke forth into one of the old melodies that must always be welcome.

It was a double-room, this lighted drawing-room where the blinds were up. Beyond the folding-doors, standing only half open, four people sat at whist: an elderly gentleman and his three daughters. Another daughter stood by the fire talking with a very young man, an ensign in the army. The gentleman on the sofa in the front room was ill, and liked to lie in as much quiet as might be. He had come home from India invalided; and his father and sisters hastened from the Continent to receive and nurse him. That was a month or two ago. A tall, fine man he looked, lying there; but the limbs were wasted, the face was sharp with suffering. The young lady not playing cards came in quietly and approached him. She was motherly-looking; five-and-thirty years of age at least.

"Charles, dear, are you sure you will not take anything? Some wine and water?—or an egg beaten up?—or—"

"Nothing, Letty," he interrupted, opening his eyes. "Let me be: that's all. I am quite comfortable."

"I hope—I hope you were not asleep! Did I waken you?"

"I was not asleep. Is George Callaway gone?"

"Oh, no. He means to stay and watch-in Christmas Day."

The invalid closed his eyes, and she went back to the other room. He had been buried in thoughts of India. But for this sickness which had overtaken him, he should have been now a married man, for he had engaged himself to a young lady out there. He knew now; he had known it for some two or three weeks past; that there could be neither recovery nor marriage for him. The sickness, in spite of all the skill of the doctors, would be a "sickness unto death:" and he was doing his best to reconcile himself to his fate, and to make his peace with God.

But there were bitter regrets in his heart yet: and he liked to lie at this, the still evening hour, and live in memories of the past: though it brought to his spirit a tender aching. How *poor* earthly interests were growing to appear beside those greater interests that he must soon inevitably enter on! The fret and tear of worldly ambition was over. It had been but folly at the wisest: as he saw and felt now.

His thoughts roamed away to his early life. His mother—he could remember still how passionately she had loved him—had died of the very complaint that had now developed itself in him; ay, and at about the same age too. Save for that one loss—it had occurred when he was old enough to grieve for it—his lot had been a sunny one. Heir to a sufficiently fair estate; handsome, well-bred; allowed to follow his inclination in wishing to enter the army; rather indulged as a boy; made much of by his proud sisters—yes, it had all been bright. But he was looking back now at the sombre aspects of the past, rather than the bright ones. The friends he had lost, who had gone before him into the land where there shall be no parting, kept coming into his mind one after another. His mother the first. She—

"Oft in the stilly night, ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond memory brings the light of other day's around me.
The smiles, the tears of boyhood's years;
the words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone, now dimmed and gone,
the cheerful hearts now broken."

A man's voice had broken into song right under the window. It was like a burst of melody. Captain Seaton (you have scarcely failed to recognize the family) raised himself on his elbow, his breath held, his lips parted. Not a word, not a tone lost he.

It was not so much that the song had sprung up in strange assimilation with his thoughts; it was not that the voice had in it a low, sad, sweet thrill of music: but it was also that the song and the singer brought back to Captain Seaton those bygone days with startling vividness. This song had been a favorite one at home: Robert used to sing it. Why! Robert had sung it, amidst others, the very night before he, Charles Seaton, departed for India. But for its utter improbability, he could have fancied it was his brother singing it now, the tones and manner were so like what Robert's used to be—poor Robert, who had since gone to the dogs. Neither before nor after had he heard anybody sing it as Robert sang it: until now. Hush! the second verse was beginning.

"When I remember all, the friends so linked together,
I've seen around me fall, like leaves in wintry weather;
I feel like one who treads alone some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled, whose glory's dead, and all but he departed.
Thus in the stilly night ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light of other days around me."

The melody died away into a pause of stillness. George Callaway, a boy of nineteen, had come to the window to look and listen.

"A nice voice that; sings like a gentleman, not like a street-singer," remarked the young ensign. "Some poor fellow hard-up, perhaps."

"Ay," said Captain Seaton, keeping one hand over his eyes; "take him this, George."

The ensign went down with the shilling, and dropped it into the singer's hand—a man in a cape and slouched hat.

"Thank you," was the answer. And the accent was quite a refined one.

"Your voice is that of a gentleman," said the boy impulsively. "It's not like a street-singer's."

"Distress makes me do it," returned Robert Seaton, quite as impulsively and more incautiously than the other. "Thank you, again."

Ensign Callaway closed the door behind him, and went upstairs. The singer moved off a few steps to the next house, and began another song: "O Bay of Dublin."

But the incident had brought his brother Robert all too forcibly to the mind of Captain Seaton. Never a supposition, however, crossed him that it was really Robert: men rarely see a romance when it lies before their faces ready to be picked up. All the sad and tender memories connected with his boyhood's home were dancing through the mind of Captain Seaton. Images passed swiftly one into the other. The time that had been; the present days that were now flying, oh very swiftly; the future that he would so soon have entered on to spend in eternity. Never had he felt so sad: never had he realized the truth of the awful responsibility that lay upon him—that must lie upon all who are dying. He *thought* more, in that one hour, than he had during his whole previous life or through his illness: at least, more to the purpose. The sweet voice of the singer had echoed in his ear, fainter and fainter, until it died away in the distance: it remained to haunt his memory. He had been content to accept the report furnished him, that Robert had misbehaved himself and was gone to the dogs: but he asked himself now whether some other duty might not lie upon him. Certainly it was an hour fraught with the most earnest reflection to Captain Seaton.

A movement at his elbow caused him to look up suddenly. His father had approached. The girls and the ensign (they had known him when he was in long clothes) had gone to the dining-room below to feast upon toast and mulled wine. To Mr. Seaton's surprise, he saw the eyes, looking up so wistfully, were swimming in tears.

"Why, Charles! What's amiss?"

"I—I have been thinking a good deal, sir. Of old times."

"Will you come down stairs? We are going to drink in Christmas—for good luck."

Charles Seaton shook his head. He knew he should not live to see another: he would not "drink in" this. Mr. Seaton, divining somewhat of the refusal, stayed where he was.

"We used always to drink it in at Seaton Farm, Charles. You remember that?"

"Over well, father. It has been present with me to-night amidst other remembrances. You, and the girls, and I, and Robert—little Bobby, that we all so loved."

Mr. Seaton growled at the name.

"Where is he, sir?"

"Where is he! Do you suppose I know—or care? When a son turns out as he did, he is not worth looking after."

"What he did—sir, I cannot help thinking it—might have been done in the best of good faith," said Captain Seaton.

"Was his obstinate marriage an act of good faith—the marrying of a girl beneath him? Did the giving up of his profession show good faith? He came to me with a demand—like the Prodigal Son in Scripture—'Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me;' and I gave to him, and cast him off. Was the deluding me—since—into risking and losing my thousands—the money that I had been saving up for his sisters' fortunes—done in good faith? Don't talk nonsense, Charles," concluded the angry gentleman.

"But I want to talk to you, sir."

"Not about *him*."

"The Prodigal Son, when he came home to his father repentant, was welcomed with tears and kisses; with music, and dancing, and rejoicing; they put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet—for he had been lost, and was found. Oh, sir! those parables were spoken that we might learn a lesson from them. I want you to let me find Robert."

"What on earth has put you on to this?" cried Mr. Seaton.

"An hour or two ago, a man was singing in the street underneath; one of Robert's songs, 'Oft in the Stilly Night.' But for the absurdity of any such supposition I could have thought it Robert himself, it was so like the voice. It has set me thinking, father;—it seems almost as though it had been a message of reminder sent to me by God. I must see Robert before I die."

Mr. Seaton's comment on this was something between a growl and a groan.

"Father, don't refuse me. You must let him come to see me if he can be found. I am not asking you now to be reconciled to him; that may take place later—as I have no doubt it will. I must see Robert; I could not, else, die in peace. Why—only think, father—I could not hope to go into Heaven unreconciled to my brother."

"I did not know *you* had been at war with him," snapped Mr. Seaton.

"But I have tacitly taken up cause against him as though I were, and have not attempted to seek him out."

"He was a wilful,—pig-headed—"

The bells of the church hard by clashed out with their joyous chimes, drowning the hard words.

"Peace on earth and good will to men!" murmured Charles Seaton as they listened. "Dear father, I know you will never deny me. Next Christmas Eve, when those bells ring out, I shall not be here."

"I'm sure *I* don't know where he has got to, or what's become of him," said Mr. Seaton in resentment, when the bells were silent and their echo had died away.

"I shall have gone on before," resumed Charles, as if continuing what he had last said. "Father, you may be glad of Robert then."

Mr. Seaton growled outright at this; nearly screamed. *He* be glad of Robert! The world would be more likely to take fire than *that* come to pass.

"I say I don't know how to find *him*, or where to look for him. Such a scamp as that, Charles! He may have gone off to Botany Bay."

"We can advertise," said Captain Seaton. "Thank God," was his fervent thought. "It will all come right."

Robert Seaton went home with seven shillings and nine-pence half-penny. His singing had been appreciated—and, as was above remarked, hearts open at Christmas time. That is, he carried in one shilling in cash, and goods that represented the rest.

But with the next week began again the aching care. On the Wednesday, when his head and heart were alike aching, some one showed him an advertisement in the Times newspaper.

"Robert Seaton. Captain Charles Seaton, home from India and very ill, wishes to find his brother Robert, whose present address he does not know. Lose no time."

Robert lost no time. The true address had been appended, and he hastened to it.

Why! it was the very house before which he had sung; whence they had sent him out a shilling. And—on that sofa—good heavens! it must have been his brother who had lain there. He was lying there now—but oh! with what a changed face, so wan and wasted. His own was wasted. They hardly knew each other.

"Charles!"

"Robert!"

With a great cry they were in each other's arms. Old Mr. Seaton (looking on through the not quite closed inner door) protested, in a mutter, that Charles was a fool; and then wondered what was the matter with his own eyes that he had to wipe them.

Need any more be said? A reconciliation took place, and Robert Seaton's troubles were over. With great difficulty—summed, at any rate—Mr. Seaton was got to believe that Robert had meant good instead of harm in regard to that miserable money, and to condone the past.

"Now I am not going to keep you in idleness, Robert," he said, "but I'll give you an opportunity of earning a living. Poor old Rouse is dead: I've had the news this morning; and if you like to take his place and live in his dwelling-house, why you can. It'll be large enough for you and your family."

Robert Seaton's heart rose up with a sob of gratitude. After all his troubles and privations, the prospect seemed nothing less than Paradise.

"It will all come right in time, Robert," whispered his brother, pressing his hand. "I can see it. You will be the heir when I am gone. My father could not let any but a Seaton succeed to Seaton Farm."

Charles Seaton wanted to see Anne. Robert brought her with the two elder children, Paul in his new coat. Mr. Seaton was civil, and condescended to shake hands; and the Miss Seatons kissed their brother's wife.

"Are you my grandpapa?" questioned young Mr. Paul, stoutly.

"I believe I am," said the old gentleman.

"This is my new pelisse. Mamma made it. We've got a baby at home. His name's Bob."

"Oh indeed. What's your name?"

"Paul. The same as grandp—— the same as yours."

What with one thing and another, chiefly perhaps on account of the name, Mr. Seaton took a fancy to young Master Paul—and invited him to come again.

"I'd not say, Robert, but perhaps you and yours may all spend next Christmas Day with me in the old homestead," cried the old gentleman, opening his heart a little. "We are going down to live there again. It's not a promise, mind. I shall see how you behave. Charles, you'd like it. But I forgot," he added, his tone changing, his words suddenly cut short in their midst. "Charles—I fear—you may not then be with us."

"No, father, not then. I shall be in a brighter and better homestead than even Seaton Farm."

Minute Machinery.

A correspondent writing from London says: "The most extraordinary machine in the exhibition is, beyond question, the one for microscope writing. This enables a person to write in the usual way, and to duplicate his writing a million times smaller, so small, indeed, that it is invisible to the naked eye, yet with a powerful microscope becomes so plain that every line and dot can be seen. The inventor claims that with this instrument he can copy the entire Bible twenty-two times in the space of an inch. The Astor Library, I presume, could be transferred to a sheet of note-paper. Practically, it will be of great service in preventing forgeries. With one of these machines a private mark can be put on bills so minute and perfect that the former can neither perceive nor imitate it, but the bank clerk or broker, knowing where to look, can at once detect that a bill is genuine. The machine is the invention of a Mr. Peters."

A Wise Bedbug.

The following story of Horace Greeley is going the rounds of the press:—When he took his famous trip to Lawrence City, Kansas, he stopped for the night at the best hotel in the place, and in due course of time was requested to honor the register with his name. In the act of adorning the page with a specimen of his chirography, a bedbug with a remarkably knowing look about it ran past his hand. The venerable philosopher observed it calmly for a moment, and then, turning to the astonished landlord exclaimed: "Well, I've been bitten by St. Joe flies, bled by Kansas City spiders, dined off by Washington mosquitoes, and interviewed by New York graybacks; but I never was in a place before where the bedbugs looked over the hotel register to find out where my room was."

Swans Singing.

The singing of swans has been supposed to be a fiction; but Jon A. Hjaltalin, an Icelander, writes to Nature that he has often heard them sing in one of the firths of Western Iceland, where hundreds of them congregate. In the morning and evening their singing is so loud that it can be heard miles away, and the mountains on both sides ring with the echo of it; for each individual seems to join in the chorus. The singing has not the slightest resemblance to the cackling of geese or the quacking of ducks. It is clear and full, and has a metallic ring. The notion that the singing is sweetest just before the swan's death is prevalent in Iceland. Their nests are in small inland lakes or tarns, only one pair nesting at a single lake.

☞ The Mahometan loathes the oyster as we do the *scorpion* or spider, and says of the Christian, "*He is a dirty dog, for he eats oysters.*"

☞ If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer; but if he spends a whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. As if a town had no interest in its forests but to cut them down!—*Thoreau.*

☞ "Wordsworth," said Charles Lamb, "one day told me that he considered Shakspeare greatly overrated. There is an immensity of trick in all Shakspeare wrote," he said, "and people are taken in by it. I could have written as well as he did, if I had had a mind." So you see (proceeded Charles Lamb, quietly) it was only the *mind* that was wanting.

☞ Whoever made it, the remark is true: "Everything may be forgiven to criticism except personal malice."

☞ UNIQUE IDEA.—A colored family by the name of Jones settled in a Lake Erie town early in the war, and as children were born to them they adopted the unique idea of giving each one the name of the first vessel that came in port after it was born. The census-taker reports their names as "White Eagle," "Polly," "Jay Cooke," "Tempest," and "Glad Tidings."

☞ There are two hundred balloon makers in Paris.

☞ The following touching epitaph is to be found on the tombstone of a Colorado deacon: "When circumstances rendered it impossible for him to attend the stated preaching of the gospel, he made it a sacred rule to kill an Indian every Sabbath."

☞ Coal-gas was regularly used by the Chinese for lighting purposes long before it was known among us.

☞ Nilsson sold one of her golden locks to an admirer, at a charity fair in New York, for $150. Probably it only cost her about a dollar.

☞ Carlyle, after emptying his quiver of more satirical arrows than any brother essayist, coolly says: "Sarcasm I now see to be, in general, the language of the devil, for which reason I have long since as good as renounced it."

☞ The New York Commercial Advertiser says: "The cable of 1866 is stuttering badly, and the cable of 1865 has entirely ceased working. Annanias was struck dead for lying, but the cable is only struck dumb."

☞ The American Naturalist says that it is now generally believed by ornithologists that Audubon's famous species of the Washington eagle was founded on a remarkably large and immature specimen of the bald-headed eagle. The single specimen which he shot in Kentucky, and from which he figured the species, is not in existence.

☞ I should say sincerity, a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic.—*Carlyle.*

☞ Philadelphia boasts sixty-two millionaires.

☞ A child while walking through an art gallery with her mother, was attracted by a statue of Minerva. "Who is that?" said she. "My child, that is Minerva, the goddess of wisdom!" "Why didn't they make her husband, too?" "Because she had none, my child." "That was because she was wise, wasn't it mamma?" was the artless reply.

☞ A New York politician, in writing a letter of condolence to the widow of a "country member" who had been his friend, says, "I am pained to hear that ——— has gone to heaven. We were bosom friends, but now we shall never meet again."

☞ Bret Harte, the California humorist, is an Albanian by birth, and has tallied thirty-three on the score of life—a handsome young fellow, five feet eight, dark complexion, Grecian features, with a big nose not so very Grecian, mutton-chop whiskers, nicely clad, very quiet and unpretending in manner.

☞ There is to be another Atlantic cable, with New York city for its landing place. It will probably be laid next summer.

☞ At Leominster, not long ago, a strange scene occurred at a wedding, which really proved no wedding at all. When the clergyman inquired whether any cause existed why the marriage ceremony should not be completed, the bridegroom remarked that six months before he asked the lady to release him from his engagement. She declined, and afterwards stated that her father would not consent to its being broken off. He went on to say that coercion had been used to bring him to the ceremony, and so he should marry her because he was bound by law to do so. The service was then continued, but when the bride was asked whether she would take this man to be her husband, she replied, emphatically, "No, I will not!" which caused intense excitement in the chapel. This, of course, brought the service to an abrupt termination. The bride immediately left the chapel, and the bridegroom (who seemed perfectly satisfied with the result) drove away, followed by an immense number of persons, who cheered him most heartily.

☞ An Iowa paper says: "Don't go back on your newspaper. A subscriber to the Times recently stopped his paper, and the next week was kicked by a horse so severely that his life is despaired of." This should be a solemn warning to all.

☞ A crazy Connecticut farmer has just finished a two thousand dollar hog-pen, which is grained and papered.

☞ The Chinese at North Adams, Massachusetts, have a Sunday-school. They are very eager to learn, and the classes are always full.

☞ The worst way to improve the world is to condemn it.—*Festus.*

☞ Here are Mr. Hale's definitions of Faith, Hope, and Love, as given in his hopeful little story, "Ten Times One is Ten." Are they not worth remembering?

"To look up, and not down;
To look forward, and not back;
To look out, and not in; and
To lend a hand."

☞ A beautiful girl in New Jersey postponed her wedding day two weeks, because she wasn't going to be married with her face all speckled with mosquito bites.

☞ Horse traders of Missouri put a little oil of vitriol on the animal's hoof to make him show off his uncontrollable spirit.

☞ Mrs. Catherine Beecher proposes to lecture in Washington against woman suffrage.

☞ A couple in Newport, R. I., recently celebrated their pearl wedding, having been married 70 years.

☞ An acre of land has been sold in the city of London for $3,600,000.

☞ Whittier than Whittier:—

"Of all the sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, we must have Ben!"

☞ A man we have heard of is so short that when he is ill he don't know whether he has headache or corns.

☞ Fi Shu is the name of one of the oldest of the Chinese deities. His name got mixed in coming across.

☞ Weakness is more opposite to virtue than vice itself.—*Rochfoucault.*

☞ The music teacher who broke his engagement is called "a tuneful lyre."

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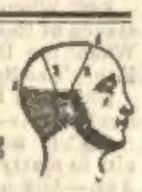

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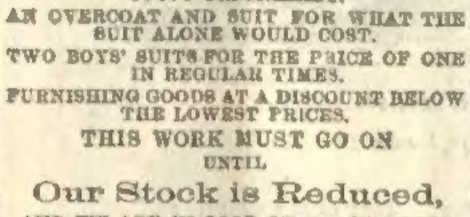

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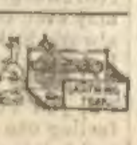

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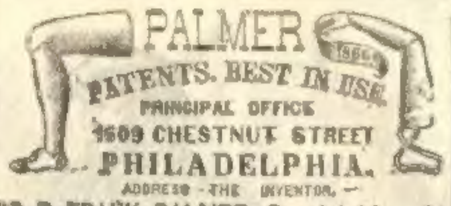

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WIT AND HUMOR.

Mark Twain's Watch.

My beautiful new watch had run eighteen months without losing or gaining, and without breaking any part of its machinery or stopping. I had come to believe it infallible in its judgments about the time of day, and to consider its constitution and its anatomy imperishable. But at last, one night, I let it run down. I grieved about it as if it were a recognized messenger and forerunner of calamity. But by-and-by I cheered up, set the watch by guess, and commanded my bodings and superstitions to depart.

Next day I stepped into the chief jeweller's to set it by the exact time, and the head of the establishment took it out of my hand and proceeded to set it for me. Then he said, "She is four minutes slow—regulator wants pushing up." I tried to stop him—tried to make him understand that the watch kept perfect time. But no; all this human cabbage could see was that the watch was four minutes slow, and the regulator *must* be pushed up a little; and so, while I danced around him in anguish and beseeched him to let the watch alone, he calmly and coolly did the shameful deed.

My watch began to gain. It gained faster and faster day by day. Within the week it sickened to a raging fever, and its pulse went up to a hundred and fifty in the shade. At the end of two months it had left all the timepieces of the town far in the rear, and was a fraction over thirteen days ahead of the almanac. It was away into November, enjoying the snow, while the October leaves were still turning. It hurried up house-rent, bills payable, and such things, in such a ruinous way that I could not abide it.

I took it to the watchmaker to be regulated. He asked me if I had ever had it repaired. I said no, it had never needed any repairing. He looked a look of vicious happiness, and eagerly pried the watch open, then put a small dice-box into his eye and peered into its machinery. He said it wanted cleaning and oiling, besides regulating—come in a week.

After being cleaned and oiled and regulated, my watch slowed down to that degree that it ticked like a tolling bell. I began to be left by trains; I failed all appointments; I got to missing my dinner; my watch strung out three days' grace to four, and let me go to protest; I gradually drifted back into yesterday, then day before, then into last week, and by-and-by the comprehension came upon me that all solitary and alone I was lingering along in week before last, and the world was out of sight. I seemed to detect in myself a sort of sneaking fellow-feeling for the mummy in the Museum, and a desire to swap news with him.

I went to a watchmaker again. He took the watch all to pieces while I waited, and then said the barrel was "swelled." He said he could reduce it in three days. After this, the watch *averaged* well, but nothing more. For half a day it would go like very mischief, and keep up such a barking and wheezing and whooping and sneezing and snorting that I could not hear myself think for the disturbance; and as long as it held out, there was not a watch in the land that stood any chance against it. But the rest of the day it would keep on slowing down and fooling until all the clocks it had left behind caught up again. So at last, at the end of twenty-four hours, it would trot up to the judges all right and just on time. It would show a fair and square average, and no man could say that it did more or less than its duty.

But a correct average is only a mild virtue in a watch, and I took this instrument to another watchmaker. He said the kingbolt was broken. I said I was glad it was nothing more serious. To tell the plain truth, I had no idea what the kingbolt was, but I did not choose to appear ignorant to a stranger. He repaired the kingbolt, but what the watch gained in one way it lost in another. It would run awhile and then stop awhile, and then run awhile again, and so on, using its own discretion about the intervals. And every time it went off it kicked back like a musket.

I padded my breast for a few days, but finally took the watch to another watchmaker. He picked it all to pieces, and turned the ruin over and over under his glass; and then he said there appeared to be something the matter with the hair-trigger. He fixed it, and gave it a fresh start. It did well now, except that always at ten minutes to ten the hand would shut together like a pair of scissors, and from that time forth they would travel together.

The oldest man in the world could not make head or tail of the time of day by such a watch, and so I went again to have the thing repaired. This person said that the crystal had got bent, and that the mainspring was not straight. He also remarked that part of the works needed half-soling. He made these things all right, and then my timepiece performed unexceptionably, save that now and then, after working along quietly for nearly eight hours, everything inside would let go all of a sudden and begin to buzz like a bee, and the hands would straightway begin to spin round and round so fast that their individuality was lost completely, and they simply seemed a delicate spider's web over the face of the watch. She would reel off the next twenty-four hours in six or seven minutes, and then stop with a bang.

I went with a heavy heart to one more watchmaker, and looked on while he took her to pieces. Then I prepared to cross-question him rigidly, for this thing was getting serious. The watch had cost two hundred dollars originally, and I seemed to have paid out two or three thousand for repairs. While I waited and looked on I presently recognized in this watchmaker an old acquaintance—a steamboat engineer of other days, and not a good engineer either. He examined all the parts carefully, and then delivered his verdict with the same confidence of manner. He said:

"She makes too much steam: you want to hang the monkey-wrench on the safety-valve!"

I brained him on the spot, and had him buried at my own expense.

My Uncle William (now deceased, alas!) used to say that a horse was a good horse until it had run away once—and that a watch was a good watch until the repairers got a chance at it. And he used to wonder what became of all the unsuccessful tinkers, and gunsmiths, and shoemakers, and blacksmiths; but nobody could ever tell him.—*The Galaxy.*

☞ "Fancy," said Sidney Smith to some ladies, when he was told that one of the giraffes at the Zoological Garden had caught cold, "a giraffe with two yards of sore throat."

"GAME" IN THE HIGHLANDS.

CAPTAIN JINKS.—"Birds plent'ful, I hope, Donald?"
DONALD.—"Tousans, sir—in toustans."
CAPTAIN J.—"Any Zebras?"
DONALD (anxious to please).—"Is't Zebras? They're in tousans, too."
CAPTAIN J.—"And Gorillas, no doubt?"
DONALD.—"Weel, noo an' then we see ane or twa—just like yersel'."

Not so Bad as That.

It is no sin not to be well up in the classics. 'Liakim Dutton was not. But he loved the American fair. In fact, he loved two of them. Those two felt emotions of love toward 'Liakim. And they quarrelled about him like two Kilkenny pusties. Consequence was, all three were brought into court. 'Liakim, being the cause of the struggle, was thus addressed by his honor:

"And so those women were fighting about you?"

"I believe so, sir."

"You are a sort of Adonis, then?"

"Sir?" inquired 'Liakim, his eyes protruding, and a shade of pallor creeping into his face.

"You are an Adonis," the court repeated.

"Oh no, sir—never as bad as that; *but I've been in the penitentiary for stealing horses.*"

Interference.

A dignified drunkard dwells at Bellows Falls, Vt. He is an old Indian, known as "Dr. John," who would be smart, save for his love of liquor. As he was tacking along the sidewalk, he made a mis-step, plunged into an opening, and stuck there, with nothing but his feet visible above the bricks. A person who saw him fall ran to his aid, and pulled him out. As soon as the "doctor" was on his feet, he braced himself against a hitching-post, and said:

"G'long now. Can's yer mind yer business? What have I done that you should abuse me this way?"

The individual explained, by saying that he wished to help the doctor out of trouble. Whereat John replied

"'Spect you think that's mighty big talk! Next time I stoop down to pick up my hat out o' that hole, want ye just to keep yer hands off, that's all!"

THE FIRST AND LAST KISS.

Thy lips are quiet and thine eyes are still.
Cold, colorless and sad thy placid face,
Thy form has now only the statue's grace;
My words wake not thy voice, nor can they fill
Thine eyes with light. Before fate's mighty will
I sit with thee and Death in this lone place,
And hold thy hands that are so white and chill.
I always loved thee, which thou did'st not know,
Though well he knew whose wedded love thou wast;
Now thou art dead, I may raise up the fold
That hides thy face, and by thee, bending low,
For the first time and last before we part,
Kiss the curved lips—calm, beautiful and cold.

Suggestions for the Christmas Decoration of Churches.

A very easy and effective plan of making letters for a text is to cut them out in cardboard and cover them with red flannel, gummed or tacked on. A row of box-leaves, single or in pairs, or even in small sprays, should then be sewn down the middle of the flannel, and a few everlasting flowers here and there. The letters should then be nailed on a board covered with white paper, edged with leaves sewn on stripe of green glazed calico, also nailed on, and placed wherever they are wanted. Small crosses and other devices may be introduced between the words made in the same way; and these designs, with new box leaves, may be used many times. Holly leaves simply strung together make pretty wreaths.—*Miss E.*

RICE DECORATIONS.—A very good method of decorating with rice is to cut out the design of stout white paper, and cover it completely with very strong gum (home-made). If a rough surface is required, the rice, which does not need any preparation, may be strewed on carelessly; but if there are fine lines in the design, and a neat edge is necessary, it is better first to arrange the grains separately with a knitting needle in those parts. When one layer of rice has been put on, more gum must be added, and this cannot be done with a brush, as the grains would adhere to it; but the knitting needle again comes into requisition, and is very easy to dip it into the gum bottle, and, holding it a little above the design, let the drops fall on the rice. As many more layers as are required can then be strewn on, fresh gum being constantly dropped over it. A great addition to these decorations is the introduction of holly berries. They make pretty finishes to letters, or may be set like jewels in the rice, and thickly covered with gum.

The following is the best method of making rice letters: You require several stones of rice if any great quantity of letters are required; paste made with flour and water, and liquid blue; white paint. Cut your letters the size required in wood or very thick cardboard. You must take a quantity of the rice in an earthen pan, make a thorough pudding of it with the glue and paste, then lay a layer upon your letter, leave it to dry, put on another layer of rice in the same way; this is done several times, until the letter is quite an inch thick throughout. Crosses, monograms, are required thicker and higher in the centre. When made the necessary thickness, you cover all imperfections in color made by the glue and paste with a thin coating of white paint. Letters and designs made in cotton wool are not so much trouble, but they do not last so long as the rice; for these you lay the wool on the card and wind round it with fine cotton, but so lightly that it does not destroy the shape. They are not so effective as the rice letters.—*M. E. S.*

We made lilies in two ways; I will describe the best and most elaborate first. These we put in the more conspicuous positions on a level with the eye. The large white lilies consist, you know, of six petals, arranged in two circles of three, placed one above the other, so that one of the upper petals occupies the space between two of the lower ones. They have six stamens and one pistil. We made our petals two and a half inches deep, and one and a half wide at the widest part, viz., towards the centre. Everybody knows the shape of a lily petal; it tapers to a point at both ends. We took a piece of white covered wire, and formed it into the shape of the petal, and then put a thick white thread down the centre, from top to bottom. Then we passed a long needleful of white single German wool over the wire, and under the thread in the middle, over the wire again, over the thread from the back, and then over the wire again, so weaving the wool in and out till the wire was completely covered. The edges were of course by this means covered with wool, which seemed to interlace in the centre. Over the thread down this centre we put a couple of threads of white floccelle silk, sewing it at the tip. We had only to bend the petals into the required curved form, and arrange them as I have described round the wire stem, to which we first attached the six stamens and pistils. The stamens were made by covering a piece of wire half an inch wide with amber colored wool, and attaching them horizontally to another piece of perpendicular wire covered with white wool, an inch and a half long. The pistil was made by covering the tops of three pieces of doubled wire with green wool, so as to make three white-green balls; these were bound together on another strip of wire, three inches long and covered with white wool; this pistil was placed in the centre of the stamens surrounded by the petals, beneath which some green wool bound tightly round will hide all imperfections. In decorations they really look very beautiful. For church decorations I have seen five of these lilies arranged on a stem, one above the other, after the manner in which they grow, with a bud at the top. The bud consists of three petals made in exactly a similar way to the others, save that they are only an inch and a half in length, and half an inch wide at the broadest; they are sewn together at the top. The stem is covered with green paper, and at the back of each lily is a kind of leaf of thin light-colored brown paper, and fine long narrow artificial leaves are clustered together at the bottom. The other way in which we made these lilies was to cut out the petals in thick white cartridge paper, and attach these to the wool-covered stamens and pistils, having first marked a centre line down the middle of each petal with a bone knitting-needle.

BAD HABITS.

What a solemn and painful thing it is to watch those who are striving in their own *weak strength* to break bad habits. Oh, how willingly should we offer any word of comfort or cheer to such persons. We never can know the terrible efforts which are made to conquer, unless we have gone through such strivings for the mastery. To those who are wrestling thus with evil habits we would say strive on, know no such word as fail, and if you will but look to Him who is the "help of the helpless," you will surely find *real* strength. It may be weak at first, you may even fail again and again, but strive on, always looking and asking in honesty of heart for help, and you will surely obtain it. Away with vain promises and act at once. Oh, you never can know what a glorious feeling one has when entirely free from any evil habit, either of mind or of action.

AGRICULTURAL.

Beautifying the Nooks and Corners.

A little book has recently appeared in England which has given us much pleasure. The book is called the "Wild Garden," and its author is Mr. W. Robinson. The object of the author is to show the English people what a large number of garden plants, usually supposed to require careful cultivation, will, if planted out and neglected, take care of themselves, and go on and flourish from year to year—in short, become perfectly naturalized. He proposes that plants of this hardy nature should be planted in such nooks and corners as almost every large place presents, and thus form what he calls his "wild garden," where instead of weeds the place shall be filled with pleasing flowers, growing in a natural way. The idea is a happy one, and quite as practicable with us as in England. There is scarcely a farmer's wife who does not long for a garden, while but few of them are able to command the means and time to keep one in proper order. A neglected garden is a source of pain rather than pleasure, but if she could have a wild garden, where one of its merits was its freedom from care, it would allow many a one to enjoy flowers who might otherwise be deprived of this pleasure. Upon almost every place there is a spot exactly adapted to a wild garden. If it is so rocky that it has been left untouched, all the better. Hardy bulbs, such as snowdrops, tulips, crocuses, hyacinths, daffodils, and others, do quite as well year after year. Almost any of the well-known border plants that are to be found in old gardens are suited to the wild garden; the Columbines, Larkspurs, Moss Pink, Primrose, Peonies, Perennial Phloxes, and a host of others. Some of our more attractive native plants would of course find a place here, and the late-flowering Chrysanthemums also. We can readily see that a wild garden can be made to the real lover of flowers a source of daily pleasure, from the time the first crocus pushes in early spring until frost has destroyed the last Chrysanthemum.—*American Agriculturist.*

Does Tobacco Exhaust Soil?

There is a general impression that the tobacco plant is a great exhauster of the soil. We supposed so ourselves one time. We have never raised it to any extent on our own grounds; but a neighbor grew acres every year, and nothing else. It was his business, and he rented every spare acre any one would let him have. Year after year the same crop was grown in the *same land*, though annually manured; and now that death has made changes, and the land used for regular farm purposes, as good crops are raised on these lands as any that never had a tobacco plant on them. We now believe it is not the exhausting crop we once thought it was, and feel very much like indorsing the following bit of correspondence we find in the Boston Cultivator:

"In 1868, I took a good crop of tobacco from a piece of land, containing one and a-half acre—the exact amount I cannot tell, as it was housed and stripped with other lots which I had. In the month of September sowed to white wheat, and harvested thirty-nine and a-quarter bushels of clean, good wheat. And now, on June 23d, I have taken off four large two-horse loads of hay from this one and a-quarter acre, the rest of it having been fed to my cows. Some portions were badly lodged, and lay so flat that even the mowing-machine did not get near all of it. I expect to get as much or more the next crop. The quantity of tobacco grown on this piece must have been as much as 2,000 pounds, and was sold for twenty-five cents through. In about four years I shall go over the same rotation again—*i. e.*, tobacco twice, then wheat, and seed down, and mow again.—*Thomas Meehan, in the Press.*

The Thistle Pest.

We have seen so much of this great enemy of the farmer when it is allowed to get a foothold, that we feel impelled to allude to it frequently. We say allowed, because it cannot get a foothold where a farm is free of it except it has permission to do so from the occupier of the land. It usually visits him in purchased seeds, or it may steal over his lines from the lands of a careless neighbor; but in either event it is easy to dispatch it if taken in time, and the farmer who neglects to take it in time and destroy it root and branch, is disqualified to be the tiller of the soil, and besides commits an offence against the law, and the community which the law is intended to protect. Where only a few thistles make their appearance, as they commonly do in patches, they should be totally removed, not a piece of root the size of a finger-nail should be left or it will produce a shoot. Where they suddenly appear in large numbers they should be cut off close to the ground, and just before a rain the hollows in the stalks should be filled with common salt. One dose this way is enough. But should they exist in still larger numbers, cutting down with the scythe as fast as they appear, and frequent cultivation of the ground, will exterminate them.—*Germantown Telegraph.*

How to Fit a Collar to a Horse.

In Purchasing a collar for your horse, it is important to get one that fits him, as both the animal and yourself will thus be saved much annoyance. The *Harness and Carriage Journal* says:—

"The plan adopted in the West, which we are assured by men who have been long in the collar business, does not injure the collar in the least, is to dip it in water until the leather is thoroughly wet, then put it on the horse, secure the hames firmly, keeping it there until it becomes dry. It is all the better if heavy loads are to be drawn, as that causes the collar to be more evenly fitted to the neck and shoulder. If possible, the collar should be kept on from four to five hours, when it will be perfectly dry and retain the same shape ever afterwards; and as it is exactly fitted to the form of the neck, will not produce chafes nor sores on the horse's neck."

PROFIT OF FEEDING ANIMALS.—All the profit of feeding animals, remarks JOS. HARRIS in Hearth and Home, comes from the food eaten over and above what is needed to sustain the vital functions. With a poor quality of hay a cow is not unfrequently kept through the winter without gaining a pound or giving any milk. She can only eat enough of this unnutritious food to sustain the vital functions. But furnish her daily with four quarts of corn meal, and she will either give considerable milk, or, if dry, gain in flesh and fat, and next summer this accumulated flesh and fat will find its way to the milk-pail, and be converted into cheese and butter.

Horse Shoeing.

We think there has been less progress in the last twenty-five years in shoeing horses, than in any other occupation that can be named. We mean by the great mass of blacksmiths. There are a great many men who can nail on a shoe *fast*, and a few who can trim it as it should be, but the great mass of horse-shoers have failed to learn the first principles of their occupation. Few understand thoroughly the anatomy of the horse's foot. The great mistake is made in attempting to trim the hoof to fit the shoe, whereas the shoe should be made to fit the hoof. Very little trimming is needed if the shoe is made right. The "frog" should never be touched by the buttress, if the foot is healthy, as nature has intended that to be the spring or cushion to first receive the blow when the foot is set down on the road, to guard the knee and shoulder from the concussion.

The outside of the hoof ought not to be touched by the rasp, save at the very edge, as rasping tends to thicken the hoof and make it coarse and clumsy. Shoes should be made as light as they possibly can be to answer the purpose. Ordinarily they are one-third too heavy. A horse's hoof should be carefully cleaned every day, and oiling the hoof once or twice a week is recommended. If veterinary surgeons wish to confer a real and lasting benefit upon society, let them open schools to teach the art of horse-shoeing.—*Kansas Farmer.*

THE RIDDLER.

Miscellaneous Enigma.

I am composed of 44 letters.
My 5, 9, 14, 21, 4, 41, is a river in Asia Minor.
My 40, 38, 7, 30, 17, 22, 36, is a character in the Arabian Nights.
My 41, 35, 16, 5, 7, 10, is the chief ruler of the Turks.
My 28, 32, 42, 25, 23, 18, 5, 7, 26, is an Oriental religion.
My 27, 35, 38, 10, 7, 33, 19, 29, 26, 5, 12, 13, 8, 24, 40, is a female character in the Arabian Nights.
My 20, 13, 3, 41, 22, 7, is a country in Asia.
My 41, 24, 8, 32, 23, 13, is an oily grain which grows wild in the East.
My 42, 40, 16, 4, 20, 12, is a title given to the successors of Mahomet.
My 1, 7, 5, 4, 23, 33, is a female character in the story of Aladdin.
My 27, 13, 10, 9, 18, is a kind of imaginary being.
My 43, 7, 9, 3, 2, is a city on the Nile.
My 20, 13, 33, 44, is a sort of a fairy in Persian mythology.
My 13, 35, 20, 43, 39, 40, 5, 24, 8, is a river in Asia.
My whole is a quotation from Tennyson.

OMAR.

Enigma.

I am composed of 22 letters.
My 1, 8, 7, 4, 22, 11, is worthy of trust,
My 8, 5, 18, 12, is an intransitive verb.
My 19, 20, 15, 16, 10, 3, 9, is a small dagger.
My 21, 14, 13, 3, 17, 6, 2, is a numeral adjective.
My whole at present you do see,
What then, my good friends, can I be?

Honeytown, Ind. PHILIP.

Diophantine Problem.

241 times the square of a certain integral number, plus 75 times the number, plus 7 is a square number. Required—The number.

☞ Send answers to "Post," solutions to

ARTEMAS MARTIN.

McKean, Erie Co., Pa.

Conundrums.

☞ When is tea like a work of art? Ans.—When it's a drawing.

☞ When does Shakspeare give an instance of the cure of consumption? Ans.—When the Duke of Gloucester stops King Henry's coffin (coughing.)

☞ Why is the letter Y like a prodigal son? Ans.—Because it makes pa pay!

☞ If a mercenary man were to ask a girl to marry, what flower would he name? Ans.—Any money? (anemone.)

☞ Why should you always choose white cows? Ans.—Because it is of no use milking those that are dun before you begin!

☞ Why is a worn-out shoe like ancient Greece? Ans.—Because it once had a Solon (sole on.)

☞ What are the best astronomers? Ans.—Stars, because they have studded (studied) the heavens since the creation.

☞ What was the first bet made? Ans.—The alphabet.

Answers to Last.

MISCELLANEOUS ENIGMA—"The rays of Happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken." CHARADE—(Ball,) (Sam,) Balsam.

RECEIPTS.

TAPIOCA PUDDING.—Soak a tea-cup full of tapioca in three and a half cups of boiling water, and two spoonfuls of white sugar. Keep it in a warm place for three hours. Fill a two-quart pudding-dish three-fourths full of rich, ripe tart apples, pealed and quartered. Pour the tapioca over the apples, and add half a tea-cup of cold milk to brown the tapioca. Bake one hour.

SAGO PUDDING.—Pick over and wash a tea-cup full of sago; pour on nearly a quart of boiling water; add a half tea-cup of sugar, and a little milk, if preferred, to brown. When cold, pour it over the apples, or mix the two together in a pudding-dish, and bake an hour. Cover the dish the last half hour.

FARINA PUDDING.—Sprinkle two-thirds of a tea-cup full of farina slowly, into a quart of boiling water; add half a cup of white sugar, and a cup of milk. Mix thoroughly, and pour it into a pudding-dish, in which a quart and a half of nice tart apples, peeled and quartered, have been put. Or, mix the apples and farina together. Two tea-cups full of pitted raisins, previously stewed, may be substituted for the apples. Bake one hour.

NOURISHING JELLY FOR INVALIDS.—*Dr. Bailey's Recipe.*—One pint of port wine, two ounces of isinglass, two ounces of white sugar-candy, one ounce of gum-arabic, and half a nutmeg, grated; these ingredients to be put into a jar, and the jar to be put into a saucepan of warm water and allowed to boil until all is dissolved. It must be stirred continually, but need not be strained. When cold it will be a firm jelly, a piece of which, about the size of a nutmeg, may be taken at any time.